

JUNE 1944

Architectural  
Library

Fonthill. J. Piper after J. Martin

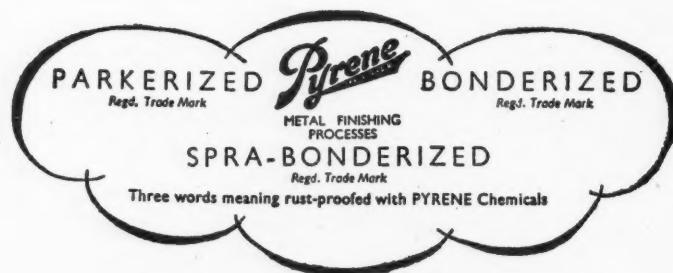
# THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW



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# *The Architectural Review*

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TWO SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE

**THE COVER.** The tradition of narrative painting in England has often been traced—from Hogarth to Cruickshank, to Wilkie, to the Pre-Raphaelites and on to Stanley Spencer. But alongside that there is the subtler, less known, tradition of Romantic painting, from the East Anglian illuminators to Hillyard, to Blake, Samuel Palmer, Turner, John Martin, the Pre-Raphaelites again, and so to John Piper and Graham Sutherland. This development is of interest to THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW because of its close bearing on that new conception of nature which created the landscape garden and the Gothic Revival. The central article in this issue is devoted to the most spectacular of Gothic follies: William Beckford's Fonthill. It stands no longer, but we have plenty of contemporary engravings, and these show not only the ethereal thinness which is so pleasing in most early Gothic work, but also that drama of which we know Beckford's age was capable. When we look at surviving bits in the Strawberry Hill style, it often seems as though all the drama has disappeared. Strawberry Hill itself was Walpole's setting for the *Castle of Otranto*. But the building to-day certainly doesn't inspire awe and horror. We might have the same experience at Fonthill if we could still measure its actual dimensions in the solid. But as it has come down to us in the interpretation of such artists as Turner and John Martin, it appears a true piece of romantic stage setting. However, even John Martin's romanticism is no longer quite ours, and so John Piper has transformed John Martin's Fonthill into a romantic twentieth-century Fonthill.





## A Rysbrack discovery

The terracotta bust on the left belongs to Queen's College, Oxford, and is signed by Michael Rysbrack, and dated "February, 1726-7." It has always gone under the name "The Aged Wren," although it seems curious that so experienced a portraitist, in making a commemorative bust three years after the death of so distinguished a public figure, should have chosen so unfamiliar an aspect. Mrs. Esdaile, most learned of experts in English Baroque sculpture, proves conclusively on the facing page that the portrait does in fact not represent him at all, but a certain Richard Miller, benefactor to St. Martin-in-the-Fields, where the marble portrait shown on the right can be seen—evidently the same person as in the

terracotta, and evidently the work of the same artist. By giving due prominence to this discovery and to so vivid and accomplished a piece of portraiture, THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW continues its campaign for a rehabilitation of what may yet one day be recognized as the greatest period in the history of modern sculpture in England, the period of Roubiliac, Rysbrack and Cheere. Rysbrack, a Fleming, had come to England in 1720 at the age of twenty-four. His fame to-day rests chiefly on his portraits, but it should not be forgotten that he also carved the globe and putti of the Newton Monument in Westminster Abbey (see July, 1943, Frontispiece). He may have been less brilliant than Roubiliac in grand compositions of several figures, but he was no doubt equal, if not superior, to Roubiliac as a psychologist and a modeller of expressive form.

# The so-called Aged Wren

By Katherine Esdaile

THE name "the Aged Wren," as applied to the magnificent terracotta signed "Michl. Rysbrack, Feb., 1726-7," used by the late Mrs. Poole (*Oxford Portraits II*, pl. xviii), is doubtless based on a strong local tradition, though she mentions that it had also been called Voltaire, an impossible attribution, since Rysbrack was dead before Voltaire had reached so great an age, and never left England, it would seem, after his arrival in 1720. The name of Wren has never been questioned, once it was sanctioned by so accurate a scholar, but it has always perplexed me that Rysbrack, making a commemorative bust, should have chosen a most unfamiliar aspect of his great subject: such portraits almost always show a man in his prime, but in this case one had to assume an experiment, made for some special purpose and perhaps, as Mrs. Poole said, based on the death mask at All Souls'. Sir Lawrence Weaver, in the bi-centenary *Life of Wren*, with its admirable Appendix on Some Portraits of Wren, writes as follows: "This posthumous portrait has been attributed to Rysbrack; it is certainly worthy of him. Wren is shown as a very old man." It is clear that he had not seen the signature, but had no doubt whatever as to its subject, though, as we shall see, it is not Wren at all.

It had long been my wish to see the bust of a certain Richard Miller, a great benefactor to St. Martin-in-the-Fields, which was said to be in the Vestry Hall of the parish, and last November one of the clergy was good enough to take me to see it. There, in a niche above the inner door, was the marble version of the Aged Wren, with the following inscription: "The Effigies of RICHARD MILLER, Esq., who had given to ye Charity Schools of this Parish 500l, to the Library and Free School 300l, and for the building of this Vestry Hall 300l. In memory of whose uncommon Benefactions ye Vestry in his lifetime had caus'd to be made and set up his Effigies. A.D. 1726-7," i.e. between January 1 and March 25, 1727, by our reckoning.

The bust then is a portrait from life of Richard Miller, not taken from a death mask of Wren; and the date of erection accords exactly with that on the Oxford bust, which shows that it is contemporary with the erection of the marble, itself made from life, i.e. before Miller's death in 1724; the terracotta was clearly an independent commission, probably from the College.

Who was Richard Miller, and why is his portrait to be seen at Queen's as well as at St. Martin's? Mrs. Poole gives us the answer to the former problem. Richard Miller was the son of a man of the same name who was Mayor of Oxford in 1652. Richard was not a Queen's man nor, apparently, a University man at all, but that he was interested in Queen's appears from the inscription on his portrait which hangs in the Hall: "RICHARDUS MILLER GENEROSUS COLL. REG. D.D. TENEMENTUM, ETC., ET E OCCIDENTALI PARTE HOSP. IN USUM PRAEPOSITI A.D. 1723."<sup>1</sup> This portrait, a half-length by Thomas Murray, is reproduced on the plate following that of the so-called Wren (XIX) in Mrs. Poole's book, and though it represents Miller as perhaps ten years younger than the bust, yet once the clue is there the identity of the bust and picture is obvious. Miller's will was proved on December 24, 1724, and to judge from his great age, the St. Martin's bust was probably modelled the same year; that it was made from life and only erected between January and March 25, 1727, is certain from the date 1726-7, and the Queen's terracotta must, from the similar date, have been made when or just after the marble was put up in the Vestry Hall, and so is not the actual model for the marble but a terracotta taken from the mould of the original model; the signature makes it clear that Rysbrack regarded it as an important work of art, as signed terracottas are rarer than unsigned, but the Provost of Queen's tells me that no information as to its erection exists at the College. The choice of Rysbrack by the St. Martin's Vestry is easily explained. Gibbs was at once the architect of St. Martin's and the original employer of the sculptor, who had come to England in October, 1720, as a young man of twenty-four, and in 1723 had a long conversation with the antiquary Vertue who, speaking of his portrait busts as "extreamly like," mentions that of "Mr. Gibbs

Architect, he who from the time of his [Rysbrack's] first coming to England almost has much employ him but has always done it for his own advantage not for encouragement. that the poore man has oppend his mind to me & told me of his extravagant exactions in his labour that he could not possibly live had not other business come in to help him, of more profit"—the busts of other patrons, presumably, of whom Vertue mentions Sir Thomas Hewet and Lord Nottingham.<sup>2</sup> By 1732 the antiquary was able to give a list of sixty-six portraits,<sup>3</sup> one of which, the bust of "Mr. Muller, a marble," must surely be our St. Martin's Vestry Hall bust. Rysbrack was after all a Fleming, and might easily mislead Vertue by his pronunciation of the name. The bust of Gibbs, which heads the list after that of Lord Nottingham, and is followed by that of Hewet, is certainly that now in St. Martin's itself since, some weeks before the note of the conversation with Rysbrack, Vertue notes<sup>4</sup> "Mr. Jacomo or James Gibbs Architect born at Aberdeen A° 1683 his head a Modelld by Mr Rysbrack extreamly like him a bald head. Cutt in Marble from that another basso relievo with a wigg on." The whereabouts of this relief are unknown, but the statue of Gibbs on the Radcliffe Library which Rysbrack carved later represents him in a wig.

When the Vestry decided on a bust of Miller to be set up on the Vestry Hall after his death, they would naturally take Gibbs's advice as to a sculptor, and as naturally he would suggest Rysbrack; let us hope the sculptor got the full benefit of the commission, as he certainly would for the terracotta at Queen's, and more sitters besides, since it is one of the finest and subtlest portrait studies of old age and benevolence which England can show, and the parish of St. Martin's was full of distinguished men, several of them Rysbrack's patrons.

What the Vestry paid for their marble bust was probably about £25, since even in 1743, when he was famous, Vertue notes that "as Mr Rysbrack for a Marble Bust moddle and carving his lowest price was 35 guineas."<sup>5</sup> His contemporary Roubiliac charged £10 for a terracotta model of a Mrs. Bedford in 1744, and offered to do a marble, if required, for £10 more,<sup>6</sup> but he was then a struggling artist who, according to Wilton, was apt to charge unprofitable prices for his work;<sup>7</sup> it is a fair conjecture that Rysbrack's price in 1726-7 would be some £10 less in 1743; possibly the original receipt may be hidden away in the St. Martin's records; meanwhile we can only conjecture, though on good grounds, what the Vestry paid the sculptor when they honoured their benefactor Richard Miller.

As for the terracotta, Miller was in 1718 living at Hinksey, as his will shows, and so was in touch with developments in Oxford. No one, not even Crewe, Prince Bishop of Durham, gave more than he did to the rebuilding of Queen's,<sup>8</sup> and the purchase of the site for the Provost's Lodging was probably a most acceptable service. We can only conclude that when the College authorities heard of the erection of the marble bust, they communicated with Rysbrack; one may even deduce the fact that a member of the College visited his studio, saw the terracotta model, and deliberately preferring it to the marble, ordered a second version, and made the sculptor sign it. But Miller's name was forgotten, and with the Wren death mask at All Souls' and the vague tradition that Wren was concerned with the rebuilding of the College, the bust became the Aged Wren for generations of Wren's admirers until the truth came thus oddly to light.

<sup>1</sup> This tenement was leased for forty years to a tenant in 1707, when it actually belonged to Magdalen; in 1709 Queen's bought it, and Mrs. Poole thinks that Miller probably bought the tenant out, since Queen's acquired the freehold from Magdalen in 1709, to use the site for the Provost's Lodgings.

<sup>2</sup> Walpole Society: Vertue Notebooks III, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57. As "busts" is written against the name of Ben Jonson, the actual number may be 57 or 58.

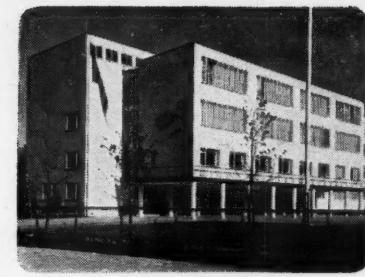
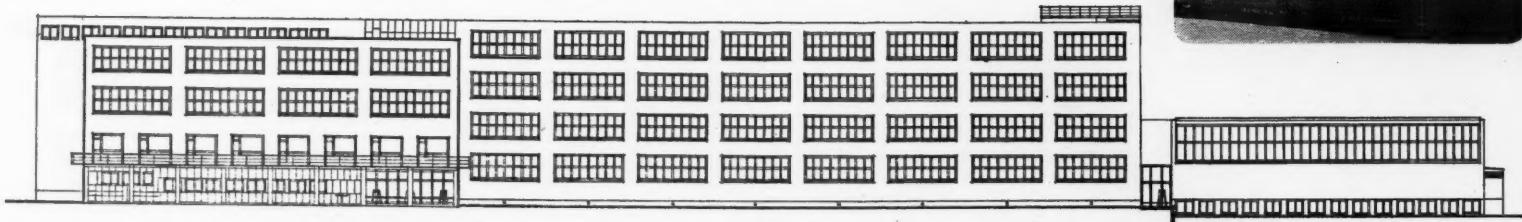
<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>5</sup> Vertue, III, p. 126.

<sup>6</sup> Receipt for £10 in my possession; the bust is not noted in my *Life of the Sculptor*, since the document was given to me after that work appeared.

<sup>7</sup> *Farington Diary I*, p. 133.

<sup>8</sup> Mrs. Poole, *op. cit.*



## NORTHERN HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS, STOCKHOLM

**Nils Ahrbom and Helge Zimdahl**

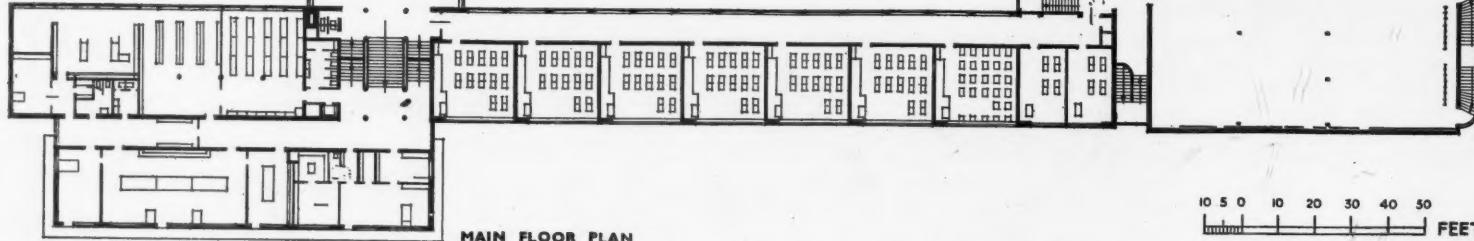
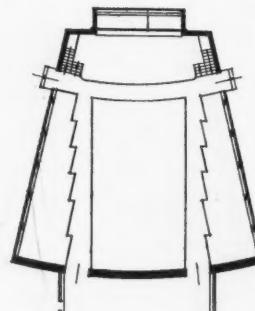
As against Messrs. Ahrbom and Zimdahl's diffusely planned Eriksdal School in the south of Stockholm (illustrated last January, pages 18-22), the North Stockholm High School for Girls is a simple and straightforward composition: one long line of classrooms on the first, second, third and fourth floors, all with their windows towards south-east, a gymnasium at the east end, and entrance, offices, etc., at the west end. The entrance, with its wide covered porch, 3, lies close to Sveaplanen, a chief traffic centre of those outlying north-western parts of Stockholm, close to the Hagapark and the Brunnsvik lake. Owing to sloping ground the entrance hall is on the same height as the western access, but one storey below ground level of the rest of the school. To the left of the hall is a canteen with accommodation for a hundred and four, kitchens, some restrooms, etc. From the hall a wide staircase leads straight up to the main floor, see plan below, with the hall or auditorium in a separate building to the north, and in the west wing the libraries and reading rooms north of the corridor, 1, and conference and meeting rooms, office, etc., south of it. The auditorium, in shape a descendant of Le Corbusier's famous League of Nations and Centrosoyus halls (1927 and 1929), and of Impington, is connected with the main building by a glass-encased passage, 4. It can seat 872, with 244 on the gallery. Cinema projector and organ are provided. The organ pipes appear at the back of the stage behind a stepped glass screen, 8—a spectacular effect, all the more so as strong light falls in at the back.

The gymnasium, 2 and 6, admirably equipped as all these Swedish school gymnasias are, has ample changing rooms in the basement below, and also a small meeting room, probably for committee meetings of sports clubs. Gymnasium and entrance hall are connected by a long north corridor to the south of which lie nine classrooms. Altogether the school has eight classrooms for thirty-five girls each, fifteen for thirty each, and three for fifteen each. On the top floor are the special rooms for geography, physics, biology, chemistry, and also a workshop.

A large sports arena, approximately 300 by 160 feet, lies immediately to the north-west of the auditorium. The Vanadis Swimming Bath (see September, 1943, page 77) is also in the near neighbourhood.

The building is reinforced concrete throughout with concrete stanchions and cast concrete inner and outer walls. Heat insulation is achieved by an outer covering with gas-concrete slabs.

*Glass and Teak, 1, the east end of the corridor in the south-west wing, with the swing doors to staircase on the left and the door to the offices on the right. The same wing appears in 4, from outside, with, in the background, the auditorium and the glass passage connecting it with the main building.*



MAIN FLOOR PLAN

10 50 10 20 30 40 50 FEET





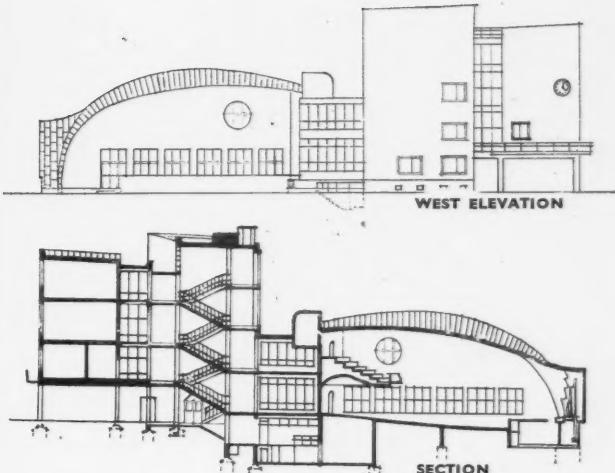
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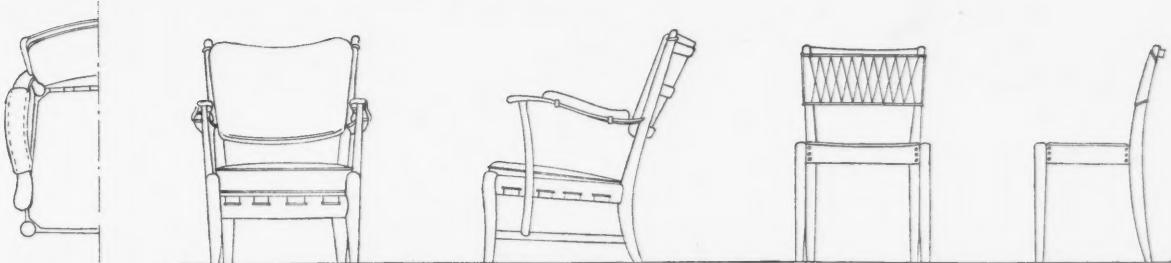
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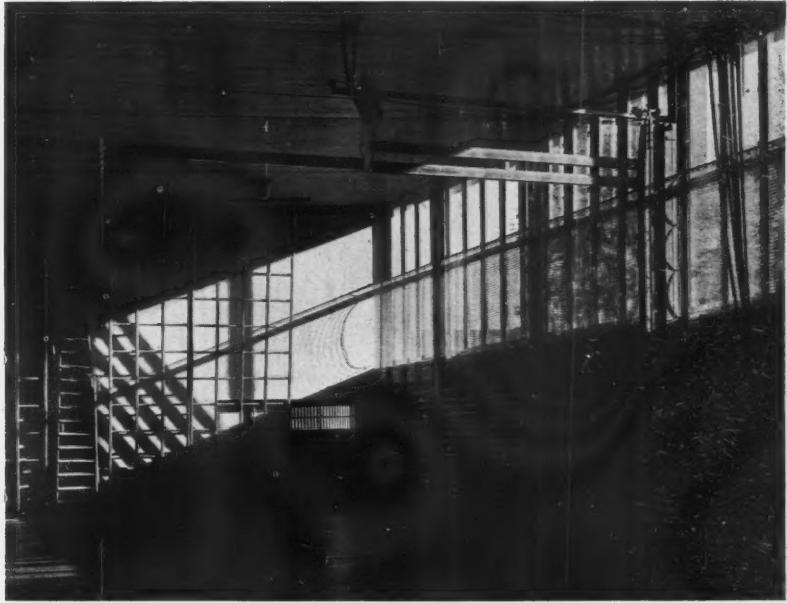
WEST ELEVATION

SECTION

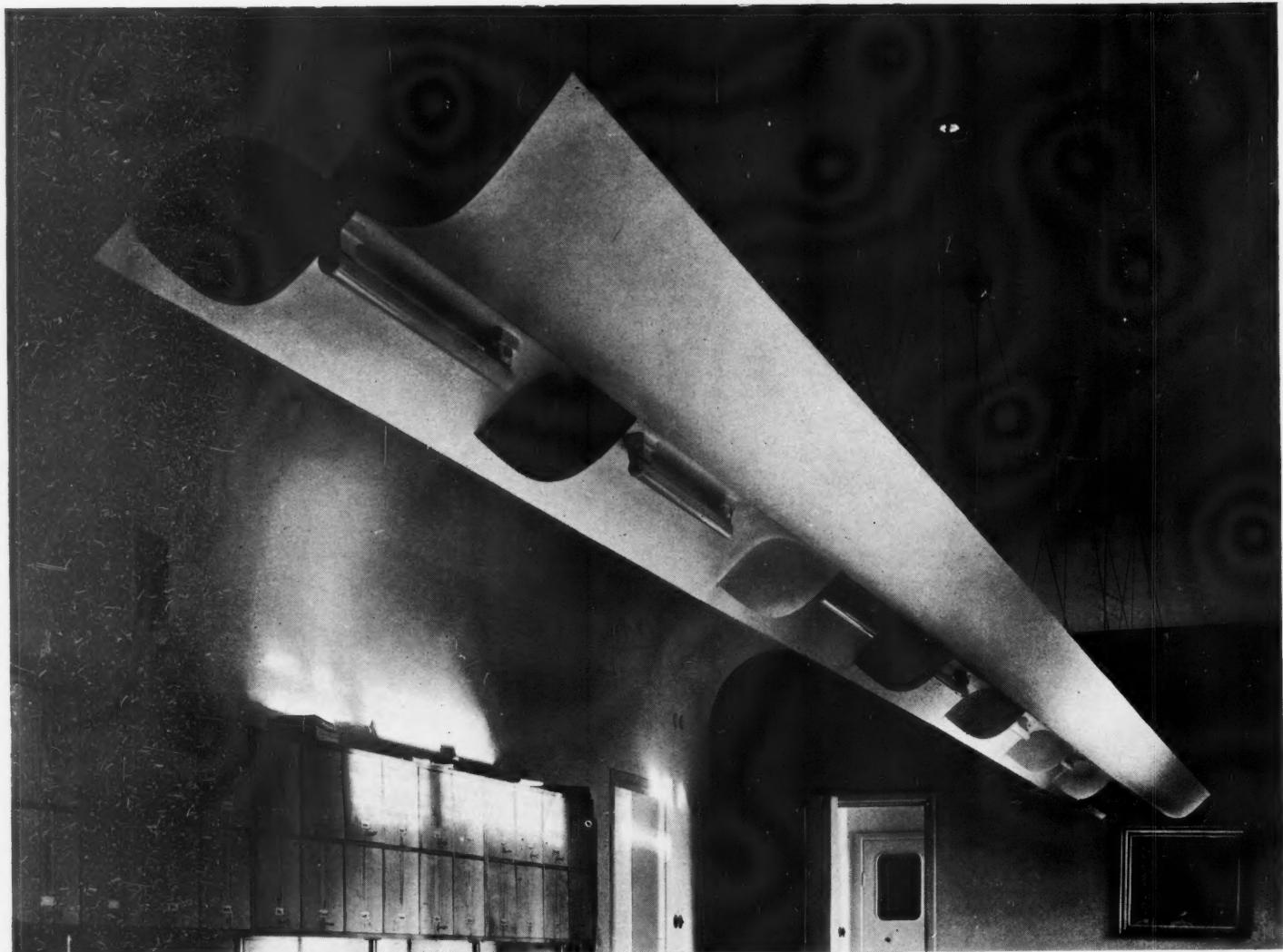
The school, see plan and section on page 144, is a long, straight and narrow block with all the classrooms lined up south of a corridor, the offices, library, etc., separate at the west end, and the gymnasium, 2 and 6, at the east end. A wide covered porch, 3, shelters the entrance at the south-west end, close to the terminus of a main traffic line of North Stockholm. The hall or auditorium is the only projecting room, connected with the main block by a glass passage, 4 left. The platform inside has a glass screen at the back behind which the organ appears, 8. 7 shows the direct-indirect lighting of a meeting room, 5 the amphitheatrical arrangement of the seats in the physics theatre. The glass globes of the lighting fittings are at equal distance from the rising seats.



5



6



7



8



# Fonthill Abbey

By H. A. N. Brockman

#### *The Abbot and his Age*

**L**AST evening we were lighted up in style. . . . Talk of the ark, indeed! Never believe that *sacred* vessel sheltered half so incongruous an assemblage of curious animals as our profane little theatre. Here were to be seen at one and the same moment, nay on one and the same bench—H.R.H. of Cumberland rattling away like a dice-box—the Archbishop of York sitting next to Dicky Cosway, the Chancellor listening to Dog Jennings, Dr. Burney worshipping Lord North, who laughed incessantly, Sir Joshua holding out his trumpet to Parson Este and Parson Este his hand to a stupid loon, whose name I took no pains to discover. . . .

William Beckford, marked by his parents for a political career, wrote thus of a gay evening of theatricals at Queensbury House in 1782. The occasion closely followed one of the most depressing chapters in this country's story, when the government of Lord North had resigned as a result of a disastrous ending to our colonial campaigns against America and when the country faced a Europe fast approaching upheaval. The letter shows him as a brilliant irresponsible, intent on taking it out of a decadent society. No less tainted himself, the hard realism he yet possessed at this age of twenty-two years enabled him to ignore the popular decadence and later to become master of his own.

During the next forty years Bonaparte, that

symbol of reaction, was cooking the European pudding and the younger Pitt was reviving and upholding the dignity of his country. At home the age of industry had spewed its first great mills and factories over the heart of Britain and the poor were breeding hordes of fodder for the machines, while Cobbett, a practical socialist with a small but vociferous band of reformers, was crying aloud with little effect. The privileged world of fashion was seeking an emotional outlet aided by romantic literature; a seed which had germinated in this decadent soil and produced the exotic flower of romanticism which coloured the art, literature and landscape of a century to come and which may yet be found to have exerted a greater influence than any other upon the future shape and amenity of our urban and rural scene.

In the writings of such men as Pope, Walpole and Gray, antiquity, both Gothic and Classical, was discovered to possess the quality of emotion. It was somewhat natural that this tended to overstress the emotional side of appreciation, since previously emotion had been but little recognised as an aid. But in spite of its unreliable nature it now became a virtue without which no work of art, no example of the antique, or oriental discovery, could be properly assessed. Thus, through the creation of artificial ruins and grottoes, literary romances and exercises in the macabre, society was able to enjoy from a safe distance all the supposed horrific accompaniments to a

medieval existence. The workaday world must have appreciated with mild and slightly scornful amusement the spectacle of fashion freezing its own marrow with the Gothic horrors of Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*, or provoking a mental exhaustion with the exotic oriental melancholia of Beckford's *Vathek*. In spite of these seemingly superficial vapours, however, there is the saving grace that these two authors alone were yet possessed of a wit and humour and (in the case of Beckford) a depth of human experience which made their inspiration both conscious and supremely sophisticated.

With this background, in which wealth was still the patron of art, the study of medieval antiquity was slowly disclosing the greatness of England's contribution to European architecture. The realization was progressing from two to three dimensional appreciation. From an appreciation which stopped at the application of Gothic form to Georgian surfaces, to one which sought to reproduce the mass and later the detail of the mass, but with as yet no awareness of the qualities of space and structure.

Beckford was born in 1780. His early education was entrusted to a tutor, whose services were considerably augmented in the departments of music, architecture and drawing by the youthful and brilliant Mozart, the estimable Sir William Chambers and the reputedly unsalutary Alexander Cozens. Beckford's adult life has been well



THE ABBOT, William Beckford, nabob, virtuoso, snob and brilliant writer, for whom Fonthill Abbey was created.



THE ARCHITECT, James Wyatt, capable of the elegant classicism of the Pantheon in Oxford Street, as well as of the awe-inspiring splendour of Fonthill.

chronicled and he has left behind him enough and to spare to show with what proud scorn he elbowed his way through society. A fortune of a million at the age of eleven, with an income of one hundred thousand a year, a grand estate and a magnificent renaissance house would have left many young men at a loss to know how to use them. But this was an extraordinary youth. A Byronic temperament, the advantages of wealth and the Grand Tour, friends amongst the cultured and aristocratic, by whom he was readily accepted because of his brilliance and good looks; all these factors perversely combined to wean him from the social and political career which he should have fulfilled. As a young man he was too irresponsible to take life seriously and, by his uncompromising and outrageously unconventional behaviour, brought upon himself a censure which eventually drove him into a seclusion from which he seldom emerged.

His boyhood was spent in the magnificent home at Fonthill, built for his father about 1755 in the grand manner, with the usual symmetrically arranged pavilions joined to the central building by curved wings. This formal exterior, however, was only a cloak to the principal internal feature, a large Egyptian hall which stimulated the boy's acute imagination with its atmosphere of oriental mystery. Immediately following his conventional coming of age celebrations, young Beckford took full advantage of the release from a widowed mother's apron strings and, collecting about him all the friends of his own choice, gave a tremendous party lasting some days at which all the gloomy magnificence of the hall was exploited. No daylight was allowed to enter and the great space "looked as if hewn out of the solid rock. . . . Even the uniform splendour of gilded roofs was partially obscured by the vapour of wood aloes ascending in wreaths from cassolettes placed low on the silken carpets in porcelain salvers of the richest japan." Thus Beckford, his imaginative

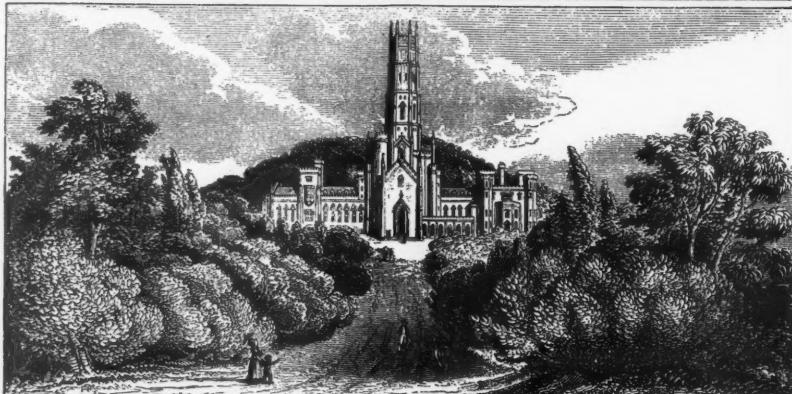
memory still fresh, described the scene in retrospect when he was seventy-eight years of age.

Beckford's attitude towards his fellow Englishmen was uncompromising. Writing at the age of twenty to Lady Hamilton (not the famous Emma), he complains "English phlegm and frostiness nip my slight texture to death. I cannot endure the composed indifference of my Countrymen. What possessed me to return amongst them?" And sixteen years later to another friend, "I sigh for the pestilential breath of an African serpent to destroy every Englishman who comes in my way." In 1801, as though to prove his anglophobia, he applied, in the midst of war with France, for a passport to that country. The fact that he obtained it only emphasizes the extraordinary official attitude to such matters: ". . . If Mr. Beckford is of the opinion that his health requires that indulgence, the D. of P. will undertake to move His Majesty to grant the license for that purpose." (The D. of P. being the Duke of Portland.)

This phobia of Beckford's was originally born of his intolerant disposition and natural impatience, but during the years covered by these letters he had been severely stung and bitten by circumstances of his own making. Time and again he was thrown back into himself, the only escape for his introvert mentality. But this very fact stimulated his intellectual activities and sharpened his acquisitiveness as a collector of the old and rare. He wrote and corresponded at length, and his letters are most revealing. It was a period of great literary production, which brought forth much that was influential in a serious way, but also much that, although ultimately influential as far as the tastes of the time were concerned, could hardly have been written with that end in view, being merely produced at the dictate of fashion. Beckford's serious writing, however, contributed in no small way to the literature of the time, his influential work, *Vathek*, directly inspired by the party in the Egyptian hall, becoming the recognized successor to Walpole's *Orlando*.

Walpole's Gothic story, written as the result of a dream, was published in 1764, was an immediate success and had many imitators. The descriptions of mediæval chivalry and the atmosphere of melodramatic superstition were superficial in the extreme, but they none the less served to stimulate the horror-romanticism which later became rationalized into the realist-romanticism of Scott. Between these two extremes came *Vathek*, a book with a greater depth, perhaps, than any other romance of the period. The dream in this case was of a more substantial origin than that of Walpole's extravaganza. *Vathek* was clearly auto-biographical, the chief characters being easily identified with the people who had most influenced Beckford's young life. Carathis, his adoring, indulgent and rampageous mother: Nouronihar, his beautiful and amorous cousin, Mrs. Peter Beckford: Gulchenrouz, the beloved youth William Courtenay: and not least, the Caliph Vathek, his own insatiable self. The book not only stirred the imagination of society, but it set the goal to which Beckford aspired and which, eventually, he won: a palace, a domain over which he had complete control and which would outvie the greatest buildings of the time as a shrine of beauty and seclusion. It is understandable that those who were ill-disposed towards him should have believed that in that walled and guarded estate the voluptuous excesses described in *Vathek* were being re-enacted.

Beckford was sufficiently affected by the taste of his period to choose a form for Fonthill Abbey which was not out of touch with the historical and national influences then at work. His mania for collecting Eastern curios and the pictures of oriental magnificence he had conjured up in *Vathek* would prompt one to believe that he had gone to the Orient for his inspiration. But his interest in Eastern art and literature can hardly have included the comparatively unknown Eastern architecture in its scope; in any case he had not travelled further eastwards than Italy, where his connections would seem to have been far more personal than intellectual. At home, however, the Renaissance had by long use settled itself into a conventionality but Beckford recog-



THE HOUSE, top, as designed for Beckford's father (architect unknown, W. Turner del.). Wyatt's new Fonthill had a centre projection as classically axial as Holland's house, though the wings were deliberately asymmetrical. The engraving of the new house is from the title-page of John Britton's Graphical and Literary Illustrations of Fonthill Abbey, 1828.

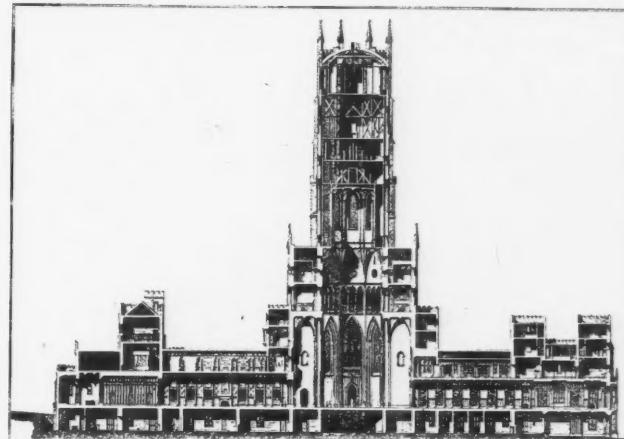
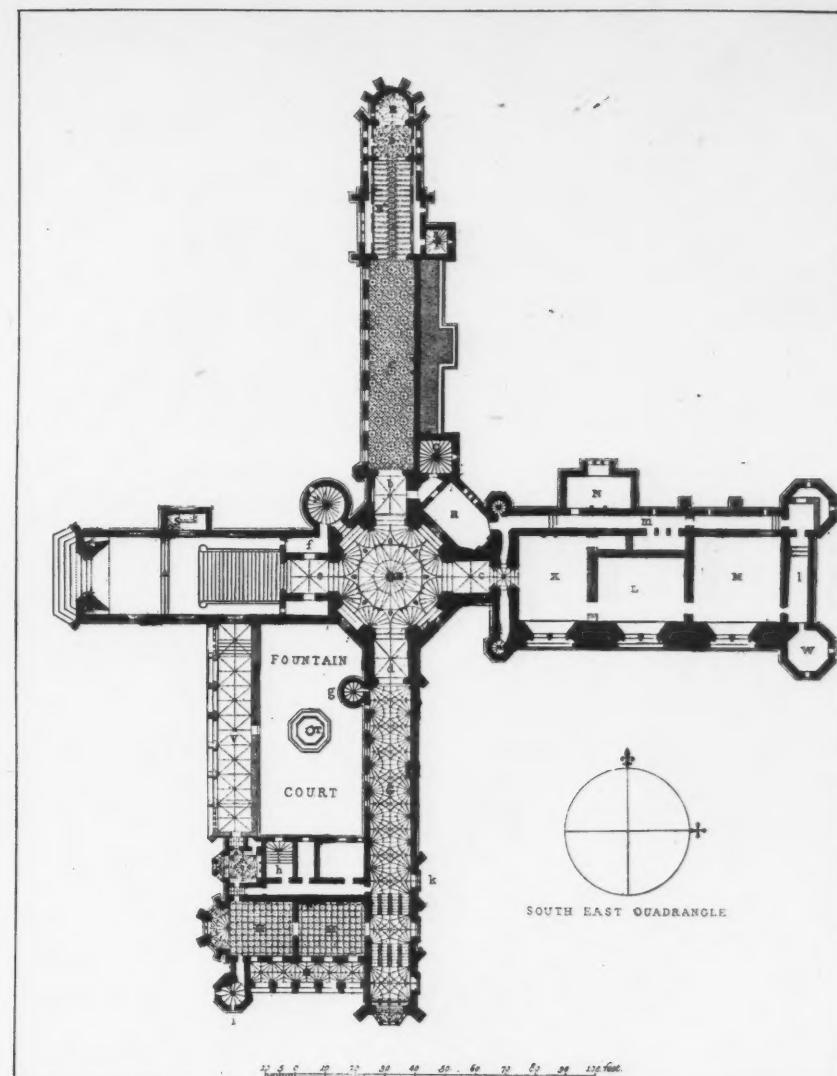
nized no such social attribute, and he therefore employed James Wyatt, the most famous architect of the day, to provide him with a fashionable plaything, a ruin in which he could entertain his friends to picnic banquets. Wyatt had been working for some years at Salisbury (which was but ten miles from Fonthill) and the rapidity with which the ruin developed into an "abbey" may be taken as some indication that the thought had entered Beckford's head to rival Salisbury with a piece of contemporary Gothic. Moreover, it provided a legitimate frame for exhibiting the host of armorial bearings tracing his descent back to Edward III. Architecturally, nothing had so far been done which attempted to re-create with any feeling of authenticity the interior as well as the exterior of a Gothic building. Strawberry Hill, Fonthill's predecessor by forty years, was nothing to Beckford, who dubbed it with the well-known description of "a species of Gothic mousetrap." Fonthill would be something great and authentic, and something great at least it was.

Intellectually, Beckford's literary work had already turned the romantic taste from extravagant fantasy to a more realistic and less extravagant attitude. So, with Wyatt's indispensable help, he put in hand the work which performed a similar function for architecture and brought nearer the realization of the archaeological and later structural phases of the movement. Beckford's vision and imagination were, however, entirely retrogressive, and he never appreciated that any benefit could come from the moving spirit of his time. When he was seventy-three years old and had long left Fonthill for Bath, he wrote with despair of the future: ". . . buildings all alike and which form, so to speak, nothing but a kind of universal town which extends from one end of Europe to the other, and even into Asia and to the African shores, thanks to Mohammed Ali. Nowhere is there any Country—the forests are being cut down, the mountains violated—one only sees canals, for the rivers are disregarded—gas and steam is everywhere—the same smell, the same billows of dreadful smoke, thick and foetid—the same common and commercial view on every side: a deadening monotony and an impious artifice spits at every second in the face of Mother Nature, who will soon find her children changed into Automatons and Machines."

#### The Abbey and the Architect

The introvert, who is intelligently aware of the beauties of the countryside, could not wish for greater seclusion in which to enjoy them than is offered by the Fonthill environment. Beckford, who inherited the estate at his coming of age, was firstly in love with himself; and secondly, with Fonthill as a potential setting for himself as hero. Of England he wrote at this time, "The island is lovely without doubt—its woods and verdure unparalleled. But such inhabitants! Ye Gods!" Neither this embittered attitude towards his fellow Englishmen, his exotic experiences abroad, his predilection for the perverse, nor the society of women could, however, wean him from this innate appreciation of his own soil. Other men of his mentality and wealth would have spent their lives on the shores of the Mediterranean, but Beckford constantly returned to tread his land and to assert his independence.

Fonthill possesses all the gracious grandeur of the English landscape at its best, in this case largely the creation of Beckford, who planted prodigally the rarest and most beautiful in trees and shrubs. To the south of the Abbey, around the Bitham Lake, were oak, fir and hawthorn, to the north-east the rival Hinckley Hill was "fenced" from the surrounding country by elm, beech, hazel, birch and ash and carpeted with "every species of moss." The Beacon terrace to the north, a hillside ride of about two miles, was enriched with laburnums and acacias, oaks, firs, thorns and birches. In the gardens were the scented woodbine and jasmine, rose and rhododendron, hawthorn and furze, magnolias, azaleas, Caroline rose, allspice, arbutus and Portugal laurel. His gardener, Vincent, who served his master at Fonthill and Bath for fifty years, planted prodigiously; in 1796 Beckford wrote to his mother, "the Begum":



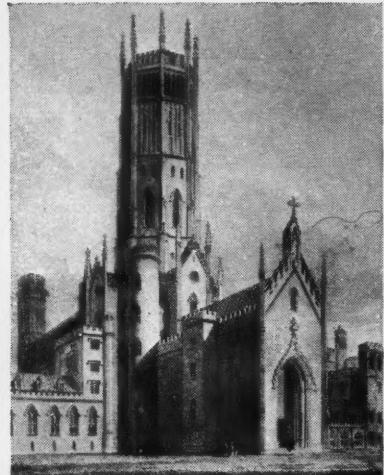
**PLAN AND SECTION.** (From John Rutter's Delineations of Fonthill and its Abbey, 1823.) The section runs from south to north through St. Michael's Gallery, G, Octagon, B, King Edward's Gallery, C, Vaulted Corridor, D, and Oratory, E. The main entrance is in the west, followed by the enormous Great Western Hall, A. North-west of the octagon the staircase to the Nunneries, P, north-east the Porcelain Room, R. In the east wing are Great Dining Room, K, Crimson Drawing Room, L, and Great Drawing Room, M. The northern projection of the wing houses the Crimson Breakfast Parlour, N. South of the Fountain Court the two Yellow Withdrawing Rooms, H. The bedrooms are hidden away on the second floor.

"My walk, which you will recollect is, according to the Plan, to be carried considerably more than twenty miles, thro' and round the Woods . . . , has already proceeded to nearly the length of nine miles. The Season proves admirable for my planting, and, if it continues as open till Christmas, I think Vincent will by that time, with all the hands allowed, have got above a million of Trees into the Ground for this year's work." In 1811 Cobbett, who was then in Newgate Gaol for his criticism of the methods employed to secure discipline in the Army, wrote a long letter to Beckford asking for (and being given) seed to rear trees on his own land. The letter, which railed against "those most faithless people the Nurserymen," postulates that when a man begins to beget children he should begin to plant or sow trees. With this as an apology he requested Beckford to direct his clever gardener to collect for him a large quantity of larch, fir and pine cones, sycamore, acacia and laburnum seeds and

horse chestnuts, for all of which he offered quantities of American oak, hickory and walnut seeds, warning Beckford that although trees would not successfully transplant, the seeds which he offered would grow. Thus, through the years, Beckford planned and planted his estate where the existing contours already partook of the gentle outlines of Wiltshire downland, with one sharp wooded hill, greater than the rest, upon which his magnificent dream took physical shape.

In 1794 Uvedale Price published his book on *The Picturesque* in which he expounded his landscape principles of "the qualities of roughness, and of sudden variation, joined to that of irregularity." These were just such as were followed out by Beckford in his walks and rides, his gardens and plantations, and in their creation he may well have been influenced by Price's book; nevertheless, the pattern was his and the English scene is the wealthier for it.

Had the central feature continued to stand until



#### Some Views on Fonthill

"Had a Shakespeare or a Milton studied architecture, and been favoured with such opportunities as were presented at Fonthill, we should have seen what genius could effect in this useful and powerful art."

J. BRITTON, 1823

"... the Abbey cannot be contemplated without emotions that have never been excited by any building erected by any private individual in our times."

"... as a combination of wood, water, irregularity of surface, and enormous altitude in building, it is a most extraordinary scene."

J. RUTTER, 1823

"Mr. Wyatt evinced the error which seems to be inherent in most modern architects, that of supposing beauty to result from a complex design and a crowd of ornaments."

GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, 1821

"... the heartless desolation and glittering finery of Fonthill."

W. HAZLITT, 1822

"The public knows that the tower of this thing fell down some time ago. It was built of Scotch fir and cased with stone!"

W. COBBETT, 1822

"The celebrated Abbey at Fonthill... was a brilliant instance of Wyatt's genius, but was not so pedantically correct in its details as to please the hypercritics of the Camden School."

J. ELMES, 1847

"... for its size, eccentricity of character, and bold adaptation of Gothic form, is unequalled in importance by any which had preceded it."

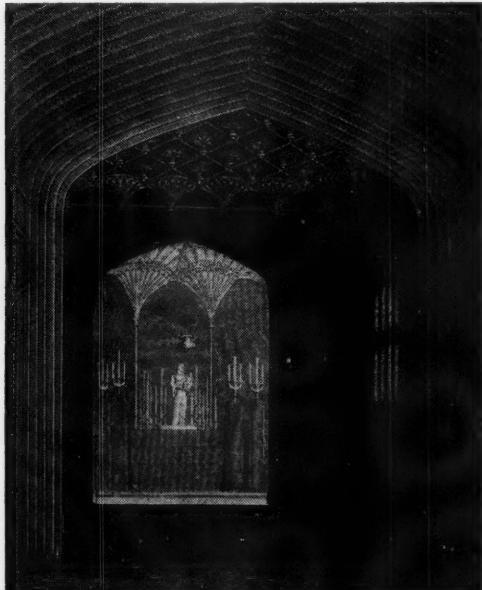
C. EASTLAKE, 1874

"... it was by far the most successful Gothic building of its day, more medieval in the picturesque irregularity of its outline, more Gothic in the correctness of its details, than any which had then been erected."

J. FERGUSSON, 1865

"All that the eighteenth century demanded from Gothic—unimpeded perspectives, immense height, the sublime, in short—was present in Fonthill."

SIR KENNETH CLARK, 1928



Top—a number of exterior views. From left to right: from north-west (Rutter), a closer view also from north-west (Britton), from south-west (Britton), and from south-east (Britton). The east wing with its tremendously thick walls makes the octagon tower appear incongruously slender. The west wing was entirely devoted to the Great Western Hall, with its magnificent—so unmedieval—staircase up to the octagon. It must have been equally spectacular looking up towards the octagon (see p. 154) and down from the octagon through the tall main entrance towards the straight avenue of approach. Another picturesque vista on the right: through the Vaulted Corridor into the Oratory. The same artists were engaged on sketching, drawing and engraving for Britton's and Rutter's books. The most distinguished of these is John Martin, who drew the exterior, top left, which forms the theme of John Piper's paraphrase on the cover of this issue. Martin's drawing was engraved by T. Higham, who also engraved the headpiece to this article (drawn by Cattermole) and sketched the symmetrical view, p. 150. The views up and down the Great Western Hall were sketched by Cattermole. The one looking up the stairs was engraved by J. C. Verrall, the other one (above this caption) by R. Sands. Higham, the engraver of the Martin drawing, curiously enough appears in other cases as a draughtsman, for instance in the symmetrical view on p. 150 and the view on the facing page.



the present day, we should indeed have had a period piece of great beauty to protect and preserve in its perfect setting. As it is, the infinitesimal portion of the north wing still remaining is just sufficient to stimulate the imagination into recalling the appearance of this ill-fated "Fonthill Splendour." Wyatt had been careful in his complete proposals to ensure that the composition should have a proper stance. For this purpose the height of the tower demanded either great length in the main structure or considerable height and substance of its adjoining parts. The compromise, which employed both these solutions, was conceived with an ingenuity fully expressed by the plan. There is a device in model making used to give the impression of a solid sphere, or even the mass shape of a tree (incidentally, it is also used for economic reasons in the design of the later "Belisha" beacons) which consists of the outline being cut out of a flat piece of material which is then duplicated, the two pieces being intersected at right-angles. When seen from any angle at normal eye level the illusion of mass is maintained: it is only when seen from above that the device explains itself by presenting a thin, cruciform shape. Wyatt, probably unconsciously, used this principle, which depended for its success upon the distant view.

In judging the Abbey in detail, therefore, it must be remembered that the original plaster and wood erection was an essay in the picturesque in which effectiveness of mass at a distance was the criterion. The later transition into a stone-built dwelling was severely handicapped on this account and the disappointment of the more intelligent critics can readily be understood when a nearer view of the edifice was discussed. Standing towards the northwest angle, for instance, and looking towards 'the crossing,' one would immediately be struck with the long, thin north wing and the tall, rather slender western entrance hall culminating in the tower, which was itself too lightly buttressed for aesthetic satisfaction. Taken as a whole, however, the general appearance was most likely far better than its detractors described, though not so good as the eulogistic accounts and exaggerated but beautiful engravings of the time would have us believe. The masonry is surprisingly good, as might be expected from Wyatt's direction. The stone used was taken mostly from the earlier building and had been quarried on the site. It is described as a fine, granular free-stone, and now has an extremely good texture, having weathered to an attractive greyish-green colour.

Wyatt's obvious misunderstanding of the handling of buttressing resulted in one of the principal aesthetic faults in the design. On plan it looks reasonably substantial, but the height of the wings, and particularly of the tower, made it necessary for the buttresses to be impossibly attenuated. This alone must have had a thinning effect on the whole structure. The buttresses were too substantial to be regarded as surface decoration (which was, of course, not the intention although more in accord with Georgian ideas in the use of

classical motifs), neither were they sufficiently substantial to be of any use. Had the tower buttressing, for instance, been of real structural significance (and consequently heavier in appearance) the lack of adequate foundations might have resulted in a settlement and not a complete collapse. It was a daring piece of design, of which the most that can be said is that it hoped for the best.

It was in 1791 that the idea of building Fonthill Abbey first entered Beckford's mind. He had then just returned from Portugal, whence he had fled after a rousing scandal in which he and the young William Courtenay were the chief actors. To Wyatt he suggested the erection of a cell or hermitage in the grounds of Fonthill House. This retreat was to be in the form of a convent, partly in ruins and partly "perfect" and containing a suite of rooms. The plans were never carried out, but by 1796 Beckford had fully decided upon a far more ambitious scheme. During the following winter, therefore, Wyatt was busy on designs for the Grand Octagon that was to be the central feature of the Abbey, together with all the buildings to the south and west of the completed plan, including the Fountain Court. Rutter says Beckford himself sketched the design for this Octagon, but research has not so far established that such a drawing exists.

The interior of Fonthill as created for Beckford by the hard-driven Wyatt was just as much a patchwork of success and failure as the outside. "The heartless desolation and glittering finery" can have been no empty phrase of Hazlitt. Even Rutter, whose account of Fonthill is perhaps the most intelligently enthusiastic, although by no means uncritical, has many qualifications to offer. The entrance at this time was situated in the Postern Tower towards the southern end of St. Michael's Gallery. This opened into an entrance hall adjoining the Fountain Court, an oblong room, vaulted and arranged with a descending floor so as to produce an artificial perspective when the visitor looked back towards the doorway. On the south side of the hall was the Oak Parlour opening on to a cloister and the southern lawn; the effect of deep-hued oak and dark damask blue and scarlet curtains seems to have been spoilt here, however, by a lack of proportion in height, misplaced lighting, cold pink walls and pale yellow ceiling mouldings! The Eastern and Western Yellow Withdrawing Rooms, reached from the entrance hall by the stairs of the Nelson Turret, were on the main floor, in the south westernmost part of the building and were originally used as Beckford's living quarters. These rooms adjoined the magnificent St. Michael's Gallery, above which was a long chain of apartments including the Chintz Boudoir, Vaulted Library and Gallery Cabinet. The last was Beckford's bedroom and Rutter refers to it as a cell of petty dimensions, with small windows and absence of all means of warmth and ventilation, where Beckford slept upon a narrow bed "without hangings."

St. Michael's Gallery, which occupied the whole length of the south wing (127 ft.), was an extravagant feature designed with a ceiling of pseudo fan vaulting in jointed plaster. Curtains of scarlet and blue with heraldic borders and a crimson carpet reflected the light from the long range of stained glass windows in the western wall. The window openings were repeated on the opposite wall by curtained recesses containing bookshelves and in between these stood ebony cabinets filled with articles from Beckford's costly but somewhat indiscriminate collection. The walls were again of the pink tint which seems everywhere to have caught the fancy of Beckford and his architect. At the southern end of the gallery a bay of charming design, with a sunlit oriel window, looked out on a magnificent landscape which still remains, spread out before the flat grass top of the hill where once the Abbey stood. At the northern end the gallery was connected with the Octagon by a vestibule, screened by glazed oak-traceried doors. This comparatively small chamber, which was but 35 ft. across, rose to an uninterrupted height of 127 ft. 6 ins. to the vaulted ceiling of the Lantern. In his account of the Octagon, which as a whole he considers to be unequalled in the beauty of vertical perspective, rivalling the horizontal vistas down the two galleries, Rutter describes the walls as chalky and cold and, where they are not tinted by reflected light through the stained glass, harsh and unpleasing. Rutter's criticism is true to this day of the tiny remnant of the building still left, where varnished pine against white mouldings of plaster convey an ever present reminder of the vast desert of unimaginative ecclesiastical Gothic that ensued. But even so, clothe this with crimson and blue curtains, gilded bosses and fan vaulting, stained glass in emerald, orange, red, midnight blue and gold, with doors sheathed in violet and covered with purple and gold embroidery and you have a richness which was as daring as the dimensions of the structure. In the first stages of the building the Octagon could only be entered on the main floor from the St. Michael's Gallery and was called the Chapel; a euphemistic description, as were most others at Fonthill. An organ loft and musicians' gallery were erected at the same time in the upper part of the eastern vestibule, which later connected the Octagon with the Eastern Transept. Three of the four diagonal arches framed large lancet windows of stained glass, and the fourth disclosed, through a transparently glazed gilt lattice, several revolutions of the Great Tower staircase "curling round its enormous central column, the passengers on which retire and reappear successively, some whirling down and others labouring up." Above the main storey was the gallery of the Nunneries, an arched triforium of twenty-four arches supported by slender columns and connected by a low pierced parapet. Eight columns, one between each of the great arches of the main floor, were continued up through the triforium storey to branch out as vaulting to support the Lantern. These columns were said by the enthusiastic Rutter to be 90 ft. in height, but in C. F. Porden's section of the building they scale but 65 ft. The windows of the Lantern were glazed with varying intensities of stained glass.

The Tower Staircase ended level with the base of the Lantern, from whence a circular ascent could be made within the Tower by an inclined plane, presumably rising the whole height of 35 ft. to the skeleton framing of the upper part. From here the ascent was again by stairs to the Observatory where "ottomans offer their welcome repose," and thence to the Tower Gallery. The height of the Tower scales 240 ft. according to Porden's section, but this seems likely to have been deliberately dwarfed for purposes of reproduction; Beckford himself said the height was 273 ft., but opinions vary on this point. Eastlake says 260, Oliver 276 and Chapman close on 300 ft.

The next portion of the building to be erected was the Great Western Hall, a great apartment (accounts vary as to its dimensions, but Rutter's account shows it to have been in its final form 79 ft. long and 27 ft. wide) with a fine hammer-beam roof, entered from the park through an enormous doorway with the door in two great folds. This was at first a "state" apartment set

aside for banquets and great occasions. Later, however, it was found necessary to discontinue its use as a banqueting hall owing, it is said, to the great difficulty in keeping it warm. Accordingly another vestibule was built next the western arch of the Octagon and jutting into the Hall, and the two mighty apartments were rendered *en suite* by the flight of stairs which took up exactly half the original Hall floor space; a rather clumsy alteration as can be seen from the plan, although calculated to make a great impression on the grand occasions which never occurred. In one of the illustrations to Rutter's book (a drawing by Cattermole), the arch at the head of the stairs, compared with the human figures approaching it, scales the gigantic height of 110 ft. to the crown. Here again, Porden's section of the building shows it to be not more than 60 ft. in height.

The portions of the building just described were completed (after the collapse of the central tower early in 1800) and a new tower built, in time for the great fête in honour of Lord Nelson in December of that year. It was not until later that Beckford, encouraged by the success of his grand party, decided that the Abbey should be made into a permanent residence. Greater care was therefore taken with the structure of the latest Tower and the building was also extended to the north by the addition of the rich and mysterious King Edward III Gallery. The old house was ransacked for stone once the decision to live at the Abbey had been made and was finally handed over to the house-breakers in 1807. All but the garden wing was demolished and this has now also disappeared. The interior of the new gallery was a scenic achievement every bit as considerable as the principal one of the structure and its setting. The width of this gallery was but 16 ft. 10 ins., the height 17 ft. 10 ins., and the total length 127 ft., of which the first 68 ft. from the Octagon vestibule comprise the gallery proper. This was richly ceiled and brilliantly lit, from the south side only, by large traceried windows with stained glass

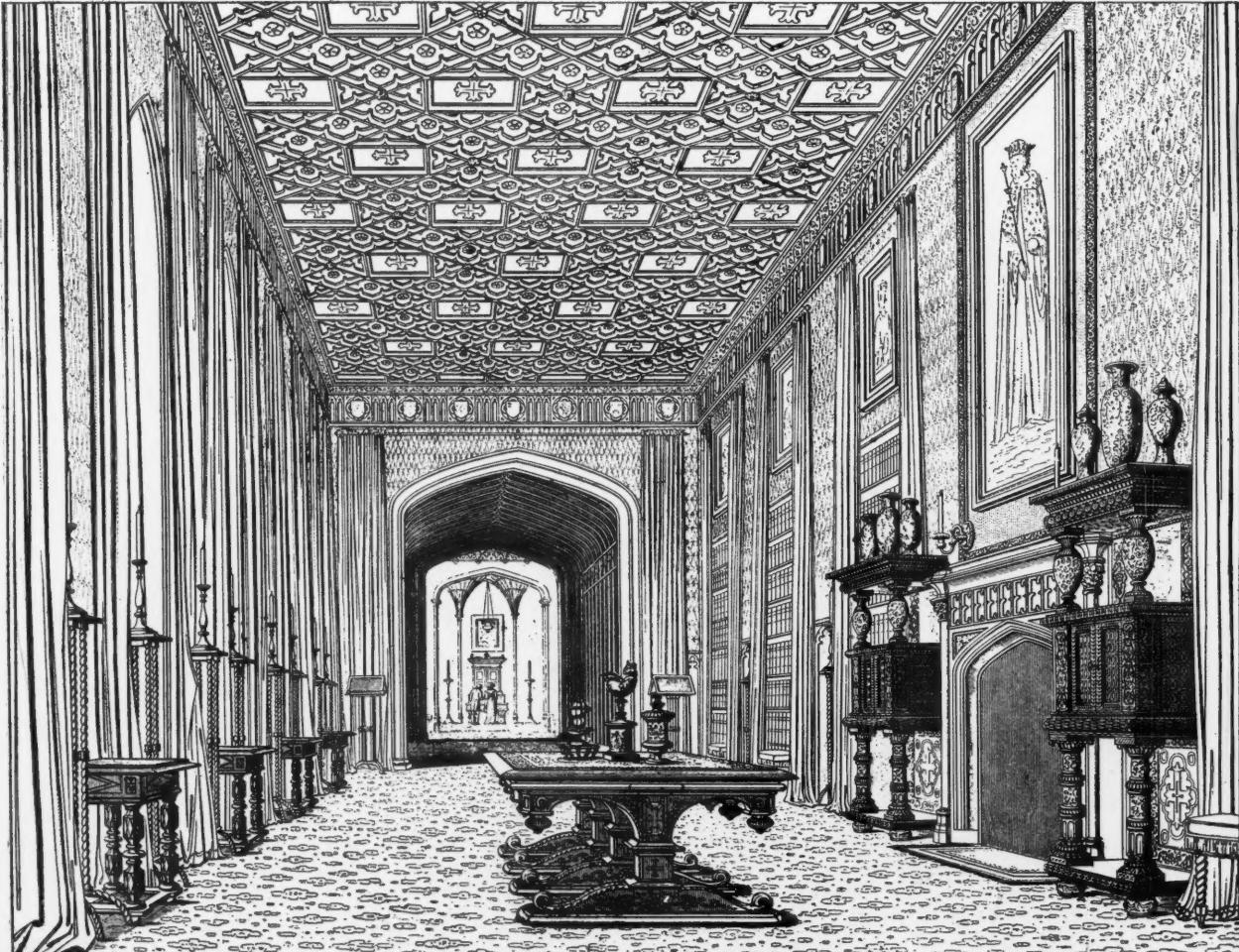
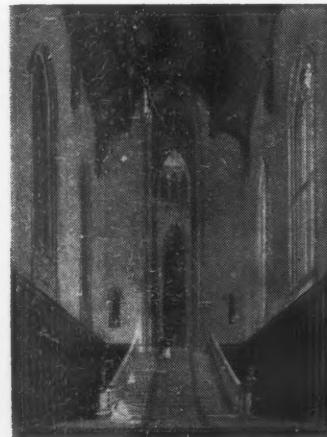
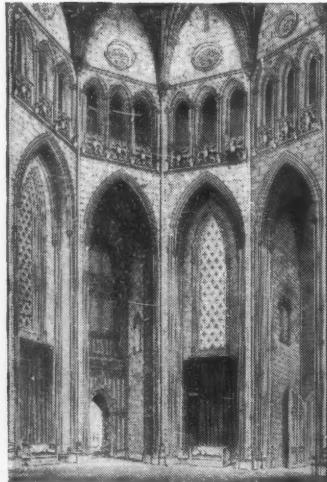
above the transomes, and emblazoned along the wall cornice with the arms of seventy-one Knights of the Garter from whom Beckford claimed descent. The gallery was extended into the Vaulted Corridor and the width diminished there by internal false walls to some 12 ft. and the height to 15 ft. This corridor was entirely walled and arched by a pointed wooden vault of an elliptical curve, divided transversely from floor to apex by narrow panels of oak, with gilt mouldings and trefoil heads, meeting in the centre of the ceiling. The only natural lighting was from lancet openings in the internal walls, filled with bronze lozenge lattice and borrowing light from clear-glazed windows in the outer walls. The corridor was succeeded by a similarly lit Sanctuary, raised by one step with, finally, the Oratory. The latter was planned in apse fashion, and consisted of five sides of an octagon terminating the gallery vista of 127 ft. In each angle of the apse rose a slender gilt column and from the capitals sprang a "fan work reticulation of burnished gold" spreading upward over a ground of deep crimson and meeting in a gilt boss, from which suspended the Oratory lamp. The walls were lined with crimson damask and upon each side was a small lancet window with deeply moulded mullions and tracery of red and gold (the tracery and colour is still there), filled with brilliantly coloured glass. The long vistas stretched for a total of over 300 ft. north and south from the Octagon, first towards the mysterious lamp-lit termination to the King Edward Gallery, and in the opposite direction down the St. Michael's Gallery to the south oriel window.

The shell of the eastern wing was commenced in 1812, one year before Wyatt was killed in a carriage accident. The sumptuously conceived interior, however (intended to commemorate Beckford's descent from all the Baronial signatories of Magna Carta of whom descendants still lived at the time the Abbey was built), was never completed. Instead it housed the dining-room and two

drawing-rooms where Beckford kept his collection of paintings. The rooms were ill-proportioned and ill-accommodated to the grandiloquent exterior, but were, in any case, only intended as a temporary arrangement pending the completion of the north-eastern and south-eastern angles created by the new eastern wing. The whole of this area was to have been surrounded by an embattled wall enclosing to the north of the transept a Kitchen Court, with laundry and other offices and, to the south, a great quadrangle entered by a suitably dignified gateway beneath a tower opposite the Eastern Postern entrance. Such of the work as was carried through after Wyatt's death was done under the direction of his nephew Jeffry Wyatt, the later Wyatville of Windsor, but Beckford seems to have lost interest without James, who knew just what was wanted and had been identified with the scheme for over twenty years.

The sleeping quarters of the completed building consisted of about eighteen bedrooms. These were disposed in the floor above the galleries, in the several towers and in the rooms and turrets clustered around the Octagon. Rutter says that thirteen of these "from their almost inaccessible height, their smallness, their want of light and ventilation, from one or all of these causes combined, are scarcely fit for their intended use; and of the other five, not one has a dressing-room." Some of them, indeed, were above the Nunneries, a climb of at least 80 ft. from ground level.

The ground floor was devoted entirely to service rooms with the exception of the Eastern Postern entrance and the suite adjoining it. The House Steward's and Housekeeper's rooms, the Female Servants' Hall and Dormitory, were beneath the northern gallery. The main Servants' Hall, "a large but gloomy room," was in the eastern transept, as also were the kitchen and sculleries. The kitchen was vaulted and groined with no adornment of any kind other than a large skull and antlers of a stag, placed over the chimney piece. Beckford is reputed to have used the Oak





Parlour in the southern wing as his private dining-room, to which every meal had to be transported through the unheated corridors for a distance of some two hundred and fifty feet.

Sculpture and stained glass existed in profusion and the following artists are mentioned by Rutter as having carried out work at Fonthill: Theakston, the figure of St. Anthony over the great west doors; S. F. Moore, the statue of Alderman Beckford in the Great Western Hall; Pearson, Eginton, and Hall carried out the stained glass, some of which was designed by William Hamilton, R.A., and "President West." Farington, in his diary, refers to Gothic statues "to be created by Nollekens, Rossi, Flaxman and Westmacott." Rossi was apparently responsible for the statue of St. Anthony which stood in the Oratory.

Wyatt's part in all this is not easy to define, as he was responsible to a self-willed, rich, enthusiastic patron and was not in the position of dictating to a client as he would probably have preferred. He was, at any rate, the architect and was connected with the building from the time of its comparatively humble conception as a convent ruin, to the time of his death in 1813, when the shell of the eastern transept was still being built. Beckford, however, was not only the inspiration but, from all the evidence, was the completely dominating personality, influencing everything that went on. Without Beckford's continual driving enthusiasm, Wyatt would not have fulfilled the design: but could Beckford have anywhere found another such interpreter of the Gothic? During all these

twenty-one years, Wyatt seems to have been a constant source of anxiety to his patron, whose enthusiasm for his "child" was constant and insatiable. Wyatt had the reputation of a man whose first reactions to a job showed tremendous activity and attention, later to be followed by a somewhat lukewarm regard. There was no exception in the case of Fonthill. The first enthusiasm was greater than usual because of the strong appeal to Wyatt's versatility and imagination, but as the years went on, he became dilatory and inattentive and more inclined to drink port and yarn over the fire than to attend to Beckford's insistent demands for alterations in the plans and on the site.

While Fonthill was building Wyatt became Surveyor-General and had a considerable amount of work to superintend for the Privy Council. In 1800, as has already been mentioned, the tower succumbed to a storm and collapsed. Far from depressing Beckford, this accident only stimulated him to further efforts, but Wyatt, with his other official commitments, was less interested. He pleaded the necessity for personal attention to his government work, but the excuse angered Beckford to the point of exasperation. He wrote to Wyatt what must be a gem amongst letters from patron to architect. "I should be extremely sorry to express in its fullest and deepest extent my surprise at this the very-(?) delay of yr. journey to F. The Fall of the Tower has certainly not shaken your Reputation so much as this last disappointment my faith in yr. promises of future attention. This is a woeful beginning of reform. I should presume by yr. total silence about the sneers in the *Morn. Chron.*, which have been repeated in a different shape, that yr. indifference at least is immoveable. You give me much greater credit for boundless good humour than I deserve. It is not in the power of ordinary persons to ruffle it, but you, not being of that description, should not carry the experiment too far. I am somewhat sore in consequence of the

late tumble and this new rub in my present convalescent state I confess is almost too much for me. Notwithstanding my respect for the Privy Council and the absolute necessity I am to suppose of your personally presenting the plan required, I cannot help feeling this dereliction of

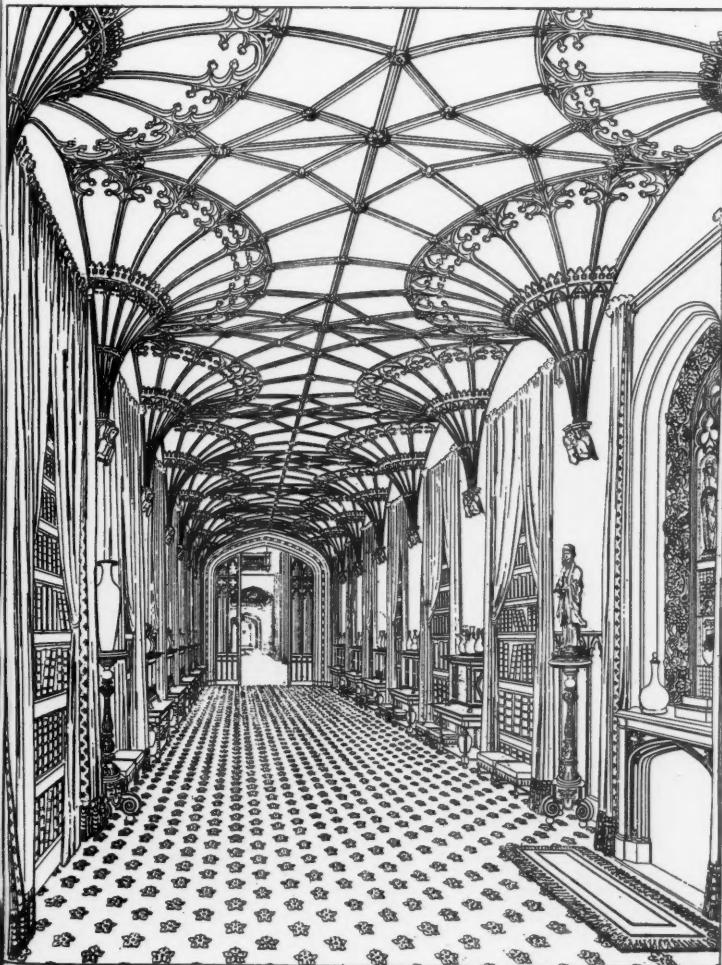


my councils in the severest manner. I feel it with such acuteness that unless state affairs allow you to bestow that exact and so solemnly promised attention long laid by which the building by its size and importance demands and which sincere friendship may possibly be allowed to merit, I must renounce the Abbey and my works and order every account concerning it to be closed immediately. Determined to sink no longer from disappointment to disappointment I give you this plain and decided warning. If you take it as it is meant I shall soon see you at Fonthill. If not—the whole shall be stopped, every workman discharged, the reasons which have compelled me to adopt so violent a measure stated at large in the *Morn. Chron.* and every other *Chron.*, *Morn.* or *Eve.*, which appears in London." This evidently did the trick, as the building went on at feverish speed, to be ready for the reception to Lord Nelson in December, the only party Beckford ever threw at Fonthill; at which the lovely Emma Hamilton danced as Agrippina, thereby drawing tears from several of the company.

Perhaps it was fortunate that the final collapse of the whole structure in 1825 took place after Wyatt's death. He would most certainly never have heard the end of it and any prospect of further gothic commissions might well have been prejudiced. As it was, his reputation as architect was undoubtedly still further lowered in the eyes of those whose revivalist taste had begun to settle into ecclesio-cum-archaeological paths. Owing to prejudice he has not yet been properly assessed, nor have his contributions to the architecture of his time been given their due appreciation. He possessed greater versatility (though less architectural integrity) than Soane, without Soane's gloomy but fascinating genius, and he was undoubtedly greater as an architect than Nash, whose Gothic never attained Wyatt's studied and authentic flavour. If his name had been associated with Fonthill alone, he would have merited serious attention for the creative imagination which gave shape to Beckford's dream of the Hall of Eblis.

#### Fonthill To-day

The architectural significance of Fonthill has been obscured, during the whole passage of time since its disappearance, by the subsequent moral intensity and earnestness of the 'realistic' period of the Gothic Revival. Even before the moral phase, the opinion was largely held that Fonthill was nothing but a meretricious piece of nonsense. This is easily understandable as, until it was put up for sale with all its contents in 1822, the building had only been seen from afar off rising above the trees, except by an extremely limited number of privileged persons and one or two interlopers. There were, of course, some hundreds of workmen who had been employed on it, but the tales and descriptions these men had to spread no doubt served to increase rather than diminish its almost legendary splendour. The selling up of a great house is always a depressing occasion, and the appearance of the great and much publicised structure as the fashionable world burst upon it through the Beckford plantations, may well have been rather disappointing. All the charm that the distant view could give, all the romantic and dramatic emphasis that J. M. W. Turner, John Martin, George Cattermole, John Storer and the



**GOTHIC SPLENDOUR.**  
From left to right the interior of the Octagon (Britton), and below, the Great Western Hall looking up towards the octagon (Rutter), the King Edward's Gallery (Britton) with its flat ceiling and panelling walls, a Palladian room in mediæval disguise, and the St. Michael's Gallery (Rutter), still reminiscent of Strawberry Hill, although the glitter of Walpole's rococo mirrors is now no longer tolerated. The three small exteriors (from Rutter) are, top left: the proposed "Convent in Ruins," the unbuilt germ of Fonthill Abbey; top right, the Norwegian log hut, and immediately above, the eastern postern tower.

rest could supply in their pictures was dispersed as the unoccupied and rather cold, grey, pinnacled hermitage opened its doors to the curious or mercenary who came to bid for its somewhat doubtful treasures.

Had the building been the home of a more gracious proprietor, however, and had it survived the century, opinions might well have been more balanced and more ready to appreciate its significance as part of the architectural scene. Eastlake, in the midst of the passion for ecclesiology and exact reproduction of Gothic detail, admitted nearly fifty years after Fonthill's collapse that

the same time hold the appointment of Minister of Works? Wyatt did all this, was mightily successful, and would have done more but for his untimely death.

Structurally, Fonthill was of no particular significance. It was conceived originally as a piece of scenery in which the third dimension served but to increase the sense of distant reality. It finished as a piece of scenery in which the third dimension only emphasized its inconvenience. The introduction of structural improvements merely assisted the transition from the first stage of plaster to the final one of masonry. There was not the slightest attempt to approach the problem from the point of view of a plan dictating the organic appearance of the whole. Appearance was the pre-requisite; not only with the idea of achieving

as early in the Gothic Revival as Fonthill, we must admit that Wyatt still had a long way to go in both directions to perfect his essay in mediæval atmosphere. Nevertheless, he had not made the earnest and enthusiastic mistakes of his successors. He did not think that to gain a mediæval effect one had to indulge in the exact reproduction of a mediæval building, and although he made use of various parts of various buildings, the Abbey, as Rutter says, "is no Frankenstein, built up of the actual head of one individual, the arms of another, and the body of a third, forming a disgusting and unnatural whole," but a frank and successful adaptation. His ornament, undoubtedly the worst feature, was at least not provided by such a group of workmen as were reputedly employed by Gilbert Scott on the Albert Memorial: forbidden to swear or drink strong liquor in order that the moral atmosphere of true Gothic craftsmanship might be induced. At Strawberry Hill, Walpole had hardly progressed further than the extremely tasteful decoration of a Georgian box. On the other hand, Wyatt had honestly attempted (with considerably more success than ever before or for fifty years to come) the creation of a building as he thought a mediæval master-builder living in the eighteenth century might have conceived it. Fonthill was a truly successful adaptation in the Gothic manner; but it was no more than that. In condemning it, people quite rightly held that, for domestic purposes, atmospheric grandeur was no just exchange for extravagant size and extreme inconvenience. Hazlitt described it as "a desert of magnificence, a glittering waste of laborious idleness, a cathedral turned into a toy shop." Yet he conceded at least that it was consistent and characteristic.

But whatever its detractors have said, Fonthill was, imaginatively and aesthetically, a breathtaking sight. The entrance hall and the Octagon, the long vistas and the tower, all combined to make an immense impression. The intention was that the emotions should be deeply stirred and, although we are not nowadays quite so susceptible, it would probably be true to say that even in the twentieth century, second impressions of Fonthill would be as powerful as the first. It may not have had commodity and firmness, but it undoubtedly possessed the delight stipulated by Sir Henry Wotton as the third necessary 'thing' of architecture.

The principal attribute of Fonthill Abbey, and the one which has the most to teach us to-day, was that great quality of adventure, which is so painfully absent in the majority of to-day's designs. Perhaps, in the contemplation of such exciting chapters in England's architectural life as are contained in the Fonthill period, we may at least find the stimulant necessary to keep our architecture both adventurous and imaginative.

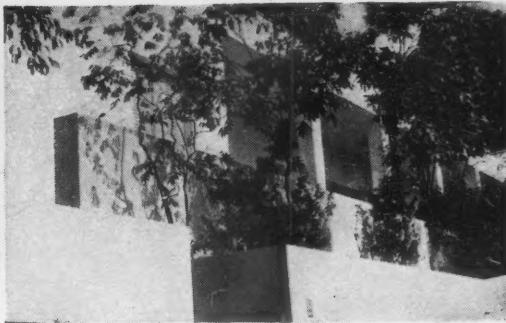
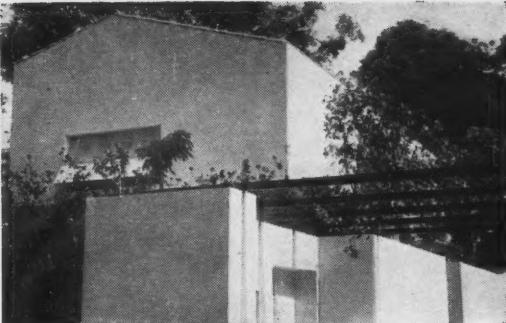


*The Alpine Garden on the left, and the American Plantations below. Beckford laid out his grounds at a time when the landscaping movement, after having mastered the English countryside, set out to incorporate into the new pattern the grander effects of foreign scenery. Rutter praises the rhododendrons, magnolias, azaleas, arbutus of the American gardens immediately south of the house. The Alpine Garden with its hanging foliage was close to the serpentine lake, well over half a mile east of the house.*

"for its size, eccentricity of character, and bold adaptation of Gothic form" it was "unequalled in importance by any which had preceded it." Even with such qualifications, this was a considerable compliment from the eighteen seventies. The fact, however, that "Wyatt the Destroyer" was the author was sufficient to condemn the building in the eyes of the nineteenth century. Wyatt was an eclectic who rushed from Classic to Gothic and from revival to restoration with the greatest ease. Owing to the fluctuations of eighteenth-century style it was, nevertheless, not uncommon for such catholicity to be evident. The patrons upon whom architects relied were equally well versed in the academic advantages of Greece or Rome and the romantic possibilities of the dark ages in England. Beckford's violent reaction in favour of the neo-Greek Lansdown Tower at Bath, his later home, is a case in point. This building was designed by H. E. Goodridge and completed in 1825; a square tower, a mere 180 ft. high, crowned with a cast-iron model of the temple of Lysicrates wherein, behind plate glass windows, Beckford could watch the Bristol Channel or gaze upon his distant Fonthill, which he survived for nineteen years.

The appearance of the little of it that remains is surprisingly authentic, considering the fact that Wyatt's treatment of the Gothic style in the restoration of churches and cathedrals has been so ferociously attacked by generation after generation of antiquarians. By his works he became in due course the most violently hated architect against whom professional emotions have ever been directed. Even to-day, though his Palladian and Adamite work can be regarded as redeeming in the eyes of most, the phobia still sticks on the ecclesiastical side. Still, should we not try to be juster to an architect who, if he lived in our time, could out-Lutyens the late Sir Edwin, with equal facility out-Corbusier Monsieur Jeanneret and at





## HOUSE AT SÃO PAULO

### Bernard Rudofsky

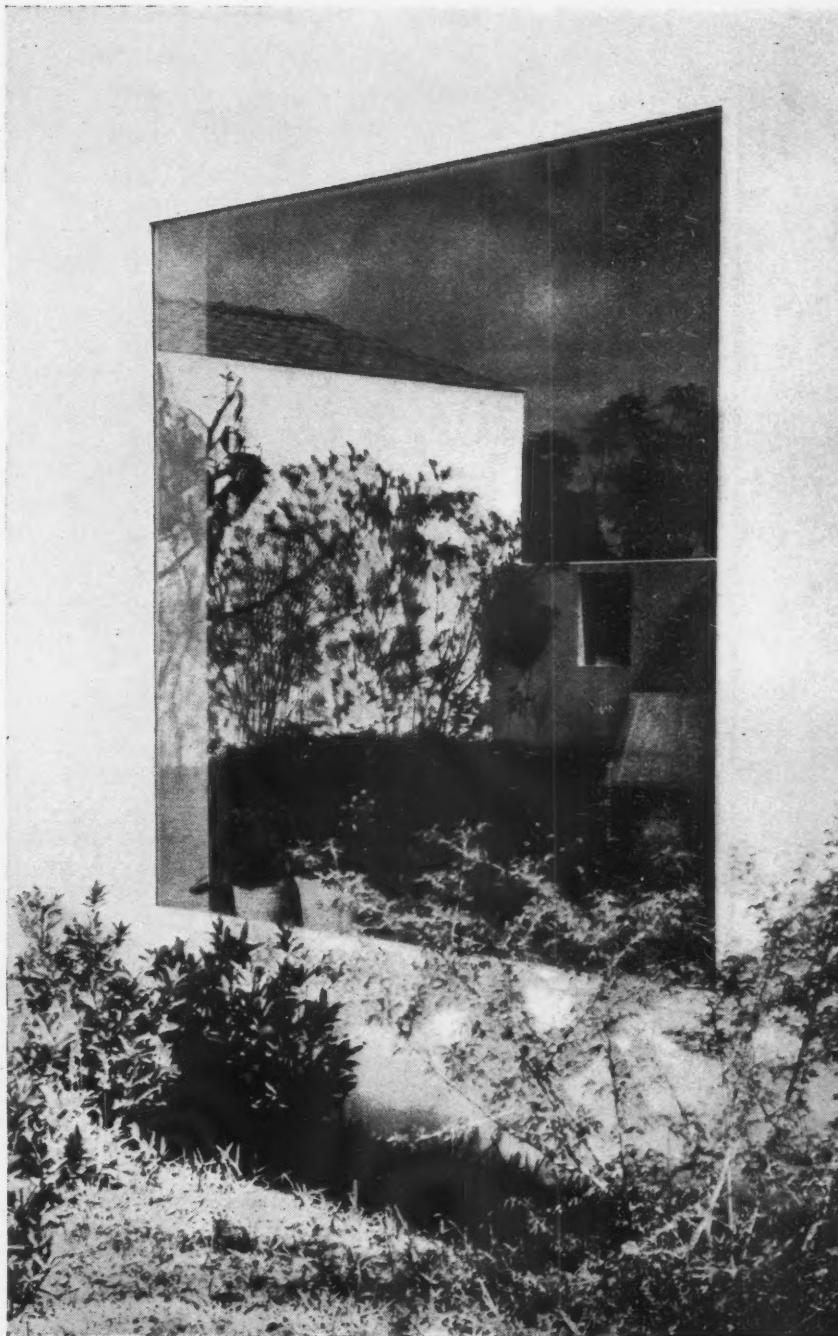
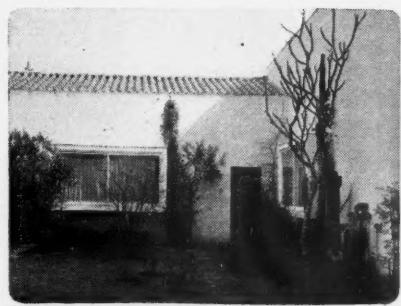
**THE SITE.**—The site is a street lot of 180 ft. frontage and 150 ft. depth. To the north it is bordered by tropical trees, some of which are higher than 100 feet. The privacy of a country house is achieved by high enclosing walls. While one can look out through them, they hide the house and gardens from the street.

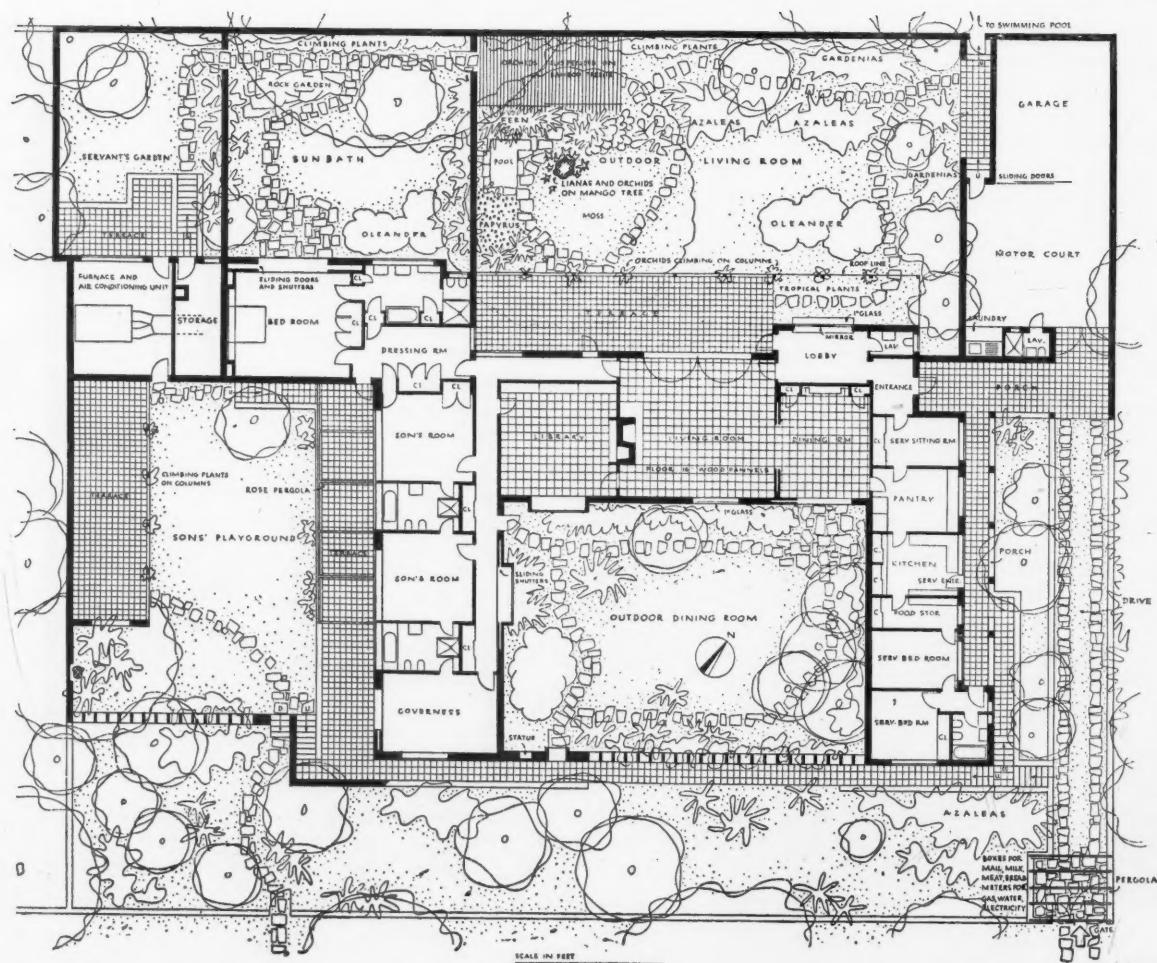
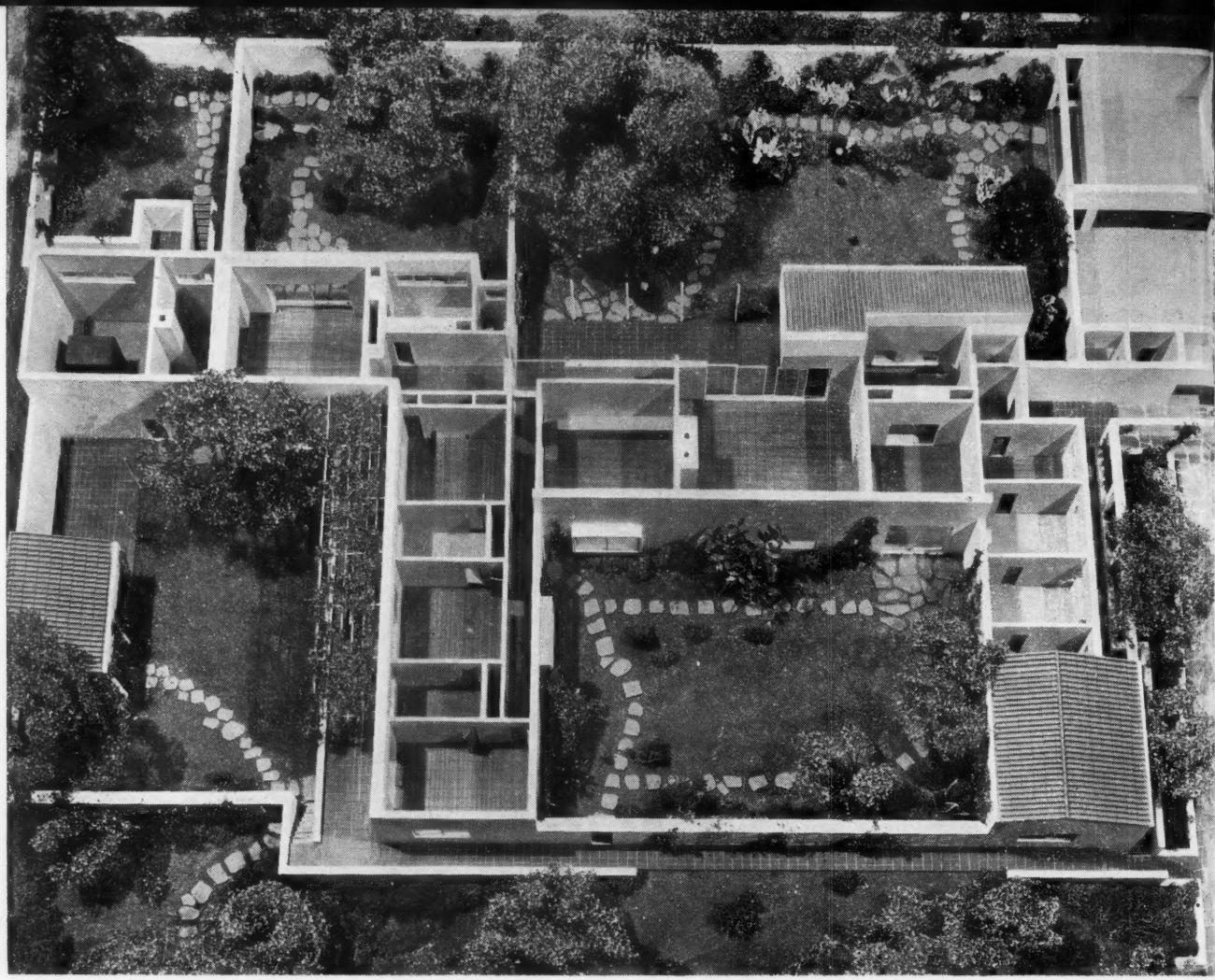
**PLANNING.**—Accommodation was required for the owner and his wife, two young sons, their governess, and the servants. The plan with its five patios, two covered terraces and three pergolas is closely related to the various living portions of the house. Although a moderate climate and a prolific growth of vegetation are a constant invitation to live outdoors, the adequate place for doing so, which is the high-walled garden court, in Brazil is as rare as in England. By thus linking up gardens and rooms, the size of the house was doubled at very little extra cost. Its parts are all easily accessible, and yet are easy to be isolated. All rooms are at one level, reached by an ascending drive way. An unusual arrangement is the servants' wing flanking the entrance; its reason is the peculiar Brazilian delivery system. Food is handled by individual dealers, and is deposited like mail in boxes at the gate. There are also a children's entrance, and a gate on the north side which leads to tennis courts and a swimming pool.

**CONSTRUCTION AND EQUIPMENT.**—As the house stands on former swamp land, concrete piles were used for the foundation. The house itself is almost entirely reinforced concrete with brick fill, and is insulated throughout as well as having very thick walls; the exterior of the house and garden walls are white stucco rendered. The principal rooms are high-ceilinged, and the roof over the central portion of the house is considerably higher than appears in any of the photographs. In this upper part of the roof are the ducts for the air conditioning, and a large water tank which supplies baths and kitchen. The floors, apart from pantry, kitchen and bathrooms, are of hardwood; those of the main rooms are paved with solid wooden blocks. The walls of the bathroom and the kitchen are tiled to the ceiling; the floors are terrazzo with aluminium joints. The windows are the sliding steel sash type and there are shutters which can be pulled down or pushed out at an angle to act as

awnings. Over the larger openings there are sliding metal grilles or heavy, sliding, louvered panels of wood. For all openings plate glass was used; fixed glass panels are 1 in. thick.

**LANDSCAPING.**—Much attention was given to the gardens. São Paulo, unlike European industrial cities, is smokeless. That is why white walls could be used throughout to



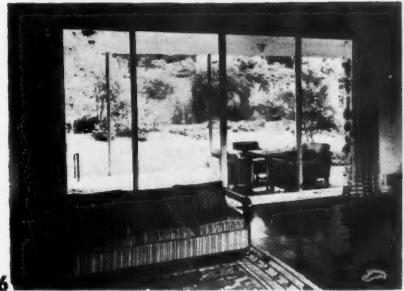


## THE PLAN

The characteristic feature of the plan is the addition of a special garden to each part of the house. The Dining Room Garden is south of the dining room, the Living Room Garden north of the living room and its covered terrace. The two children have their own garden west of their rooms and the governess's. The owners' bedroom again faces north and has sliding doors into the sun-bathing garden, while the servants' terrace and garden is in the north-west corner, rather far away from the servants' wing, which runs along the entrance drive in the south-east.

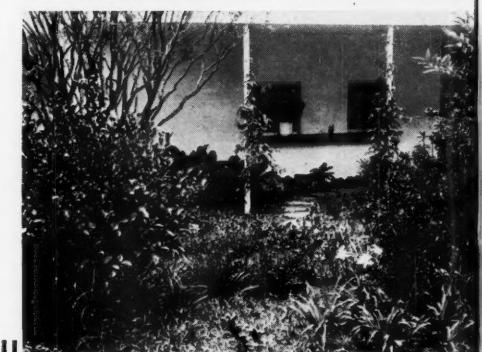
catch the intricate play of shadow patterns and multi-coloured reflections of the shiny leaves. The garden floor—so to speak—is composed of red tile, soft stone, and varieties of moss and blue grass. The ceiling is suggested by sun sails and pergolas, rustic and carpentered. Thus, by varying light-, temperature-, and humidity-controlling means, perfectly conditioned settings are achieved for the different hours of the day and the transitions of the seasons.

## LIVING-ROOM GARDEN



*The living room has one south window and a wide sliding door towards north, 6, leading on to a terrace, 7 and 8, and into the living-room garden. The south window is a large fixed glass panel, one inch thick, 5. In 8 this can be seen behind terrace and living room in the background. While thus the various gardens are carefully kept apart, a visual integration is yet achieved. With the same intention the dressing room has one window towards the living-room terrace. The planting in the living-room garden is of the freest and most picturesque, with evergreen trees, oleander, azaleas, gardenias and vines. The main tree, 7 and 8, is a mango with a pool, lianas and orchids behind. In the north-west corner is an orchid pergola, 10, leading to the only connection between living room and bedroom garden. The photo shows the flagged path which ends by the closed door between bedroom garden and servants' garden. The other pictures are self-explanatory. 12 is taken from the ferns south of the orchid pergola towards the terrace. The door and two small windows, appearing also 11, belong to the lobby. Thus a glance at this most glamorous of the five gardens can be obtained immediately after having entered the house. The recess in the background in 9 runs along the garage and opens in a narrow north door to the swimming pool.*





## BEDROOM GARDEN

The bedroom garden, designed chiefly for sun bathing, is less luxuriantly provided with plants. A flagged area merges gradually into lawn, 13. There is one large tree, 15, in the north-east, just south of the path from the living-room pergola, and a rock garden along the same path further west. The bedroom has a wide sliding door with a sliding blind, 14, 15. The owner of the house had first intended to build further out in the country to get more privacy than he considered possible in a big town. However, the tall white walls of the various gardens create a feeling of perfect seclusion essential in a country whose climate invites outdoor life.



13, 14



15

## CHILDREN'S GARDEN

The garden for the two sons of the owner and their governess is surrounded on three sides by terraces. The one in the east has a magnificent rose pergola, 20. The one in the west is covered, and about twice the size of each of the children's bedrooms. It is meant to be the day nursery. No other day nursery is provided—an odd omission from a European viewpoint. Equally curious seems the long distance of this children's area from the parents' quarters. To reach the garden from the living-room garden one has to pass through living room and dining room into the dining-room garden, 4 (on page 157), and then along a passage south of the governess's room. The dining-room garden has windows with projecting surrounds on the west and the north, where the library lies (4 left and 4 right).



## TRELLISES



17

18



20



19

*The house presents itself from the street in the south as unpromising as possible. The entrance in the south-east corner is a narrow drive, 1 (on page 157), flanked on the west by the servants' wing with its heavy detail of pergola and terrace, 2 and 3. Two of the private gardens had to face the street. To give them seclusion a neutral strip of front garden is inserted, from which dining-room garden and children's garden are isolated by tall walls of heavy concrete trellis, 17 and 19. This device serves to achieve privacy while subtly suggesting to the passer-by the delights of the hidden gardens. The rose pergola of the children's garden, 20, appears in 17 on the right against the wall of the children's wing, and in 18 on the left above the windows of one bathroom and one son's bedroom.*

Photos 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20 by G. E. Kidder Smith, A.I.A.



"When Portland from her top doth overpeere the maine,  
Her rugged front empa'd on every part with rocks,  
Tho' indigent of wood, yet fraught with woolly flocks ;  
Most famous for her folke excelling with the sling."

DRAYTON

St. George's Reforme - Patronage  
High Class '42

## ST. GEORGE'S REFORNE, PORTLAND

TO the traveller who is also an architect even the most unadventurous journey is never dull. Nor, so long as there is light to see by, will he find unwelcome the delays imposed upon him by circumstance, however unpromising the surroundings in which they occur. Those hours between trains at Muddlecombe Junction are to the socialite and businessman an exasperation and a bore. To the architect they are a challenge. If there is no famous monument in the neighbourhood to admire, no parish church to poke around, he can always pursue Mr. Donner's Treasures among the gables and bay-windows of Station Road, or beguile his eye with an analysis of railway architectural detail.

So when, on one recent Sunday afternoon, we were temporarily stranded on the Isle of Portland, we were not dismayed. Not, admittedly, that Portland is either architecturally or topographically a featureless desert, but a disembowelled rock which contains little within its treeless circumference but quarries, forts, a dockyard and a penal institution, can hardly lay claim to conventional beauty.

Certainly the prospect from the station yard lacked invitation. Before us rose the island itself—"taut, magnificent and lonely" (as Dum-Dum once wrote of an elephant's behind), its summit hidden in a wet grey smudge of cloud. Up its rocky flanks, and beyond a foreground of asphalt, hoardings, barbed wire and telegraph poles, climbed the slate roofs of Chesilton, picturesque in their distant confusion, but in detail pinched and rigid like a steel-engraving. (It is curious how ugly and insensitive as a rule is the masonry of the quarryman's house.) To the left stretched the dockyard buildings, relentless and sharp in their livery of red brick, grey cement and purple slate. They glistened faintly in the damp sea air like pieces of highly-coloured flesh on a butcher's slab. It was not actually raining—an Irishman would have called it "a soft day"—but the sky overhead was slate-coloured and sodden. The streets were deserted except for two sailors hurrying from the station with their incongruous little city

attaché cases which doubtless contained what one's school used to call "necessities for the night." A suet Sunday silence brooded over the scene, disturbed only by the sigh and shriek of the waves breaking on Chesil Beach and the panting of a tank engine on a nearby siding.

We had two hours before us. The porter had told us there was a church on top of the hill and we decided to climb in search of it. The roofs of Chesilton dropped below us, and the mists closed in, drawing cloud curtains thin as smoke behind us. The wind blew colder, driving the rain-drops along the telegraph wires and searching the tamarisk bushes by the roadside. The road began to level out. We were nearly there.

The summit plateau, when revealed, presented a strange and desolate scene. On each side of the road gaped the stone quarries, some working but most of them abandoned—huge yawning gashes half-filled with lumps of stone as big as pianos, heaving and tumbling in the fantastic sinister confusion of a Graham Sutherland painting. The faces of the stones were crusted and haggard, scarred and fissured by frost and blistered with lichen. In contrast to their primitive weather-worn texture were the colours which, seen close-to, were sophisticated and unhealthy—bile-greens, bruise-purples and cellar-whites, combining at a distance into a grey pallor. Old machinery rusted in the grass, and on the horizon, thin black derricks marked the sky.

Across this lunar landscape the road picked its way to a village. We could see the church now, riding a white crinkled sea of tombstones like a little grey boat. As we approached, it took shape—a sturdy uncompromising building, lead-roofed—or was it zinc?—with a centre dome and a little baroque tower rather inexpertly attached to its eastern end. The fabric was of Portland stone, the joints so fine as to be almost invisible, and the face of each block diagonally tooled. The string-courses and architraves were heavy and blunt, the doors and windows small and deeply recessed. This grim embattled effect was, however, softened by the exquisite colours of the stone—luminous whites,

lilac warming to burnt pink, chalky grey splashed with brilliant sulphur yellow—and by the vigorous and enthusiastic modelling of the tower.

Through a side door we entered the silent mushroom-pale interior. The air was thin and sour with disuse, and dust lay like a bloom on the red varnished woodwork, but there was dignity still in the simple thrust of the ceiling vault and the strong ordered arches of the windows. In the centre, and beneath the shallow plaster dome, two pulpits, painted G.W.R. buff and drab, stood poised over the ranks of box-pews like two hawks hanging over the ruled brown furrows of a field. There were only a few memorial tablets—one to a Swedish ambassador of the period, and another to an architect and master builder, Thomas Gilbert—designer perhaps of this church—who had died in 1776. A few thumbed copies of the burial service and an elderly bier showed what function the church of St. George now fulfilled.

Outside, the cemetery was as crowded as a stonemason's yard and almost as uninteresting. Even in Portland, apparently, Italian marble shows its sugar-coated face. In one place a bomb had fallen, felling the nearby crosses, snapping off the limbs of the angels and distorting the stony simper of their faces. In another place stood a little hut, marooned upon a heap of withered grave-flowers like a carnival float abandoned after a *Fête des Fleurs*. Two old sailors wandered round reading the epitaphs with vacant interest, the rain sparkling on their blue-serge suits and little taxi-driver hats.

As a *mise-en-scène* for a nineteenth-century romantic poem it could hardly have been improved—the weather, the background, the characters, the atmosphere—all were in perfect and melancholy harmony. So too, of a sudden, were the "noises-off," for as we left the cemetery, the foghorn on Portland Bill started its shuddering moan, and the A.A. guns on the mainland opened up, slamming their great iron doors down the grey corridors of the Dorset sky.

With this salute cracking in our

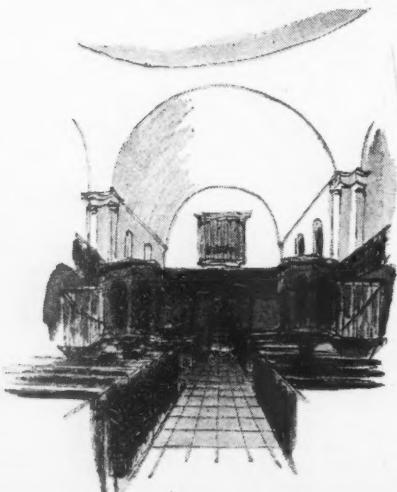
ears we descended the hill into Chesilton. It was, we decided, just the right sort of day for Portland. Haunted places, of which this was certainly one, need grey skies. In bright clear weather the mystery is dispelled, the shapes are too abrupt, the colours too angry, the desolation too emphatic.

Later, and from guide-books, we were to discover more about Portland. It has a huge harbour and is the centre of a world-famous industry. Phthysis, we were informed, does well there in early summer, but chronic rheumatism does not benefit. It has its curiosities, including a museum presented by Dr. Marie Stopes, and its architectural monuments, among them a fine lighthouse, a castle designed in 1800 by Wyatt for John Penn, the grandson of the founder of Pennsylvania, and the little church of St. George. But it is not for these, nor for the turbulent historical background of wars and sieges against which they stand that Portland should be known. Despite modern disfigurement it is still rich, like Romney Marsh or the Wiltshire Downs, in that English quality of "strangeness." A contemporary guide-book calls it "dreary." Paul Nash has called it "a place apart." But nearest of all was Thomas Hardy, with whom this part of the country is so strongly associated, when he wrote this of Egdon Heath:

*It was a spot which returned upon the memory of those who loved it with an aspect of peculiar and kindly congruity. Smiling champaigns of flower and fruit hardly do this, for they are permanently harmonious only with an existence of better reputation as to its issues than the present. Twilight combined with the scenery of Egdon Heath to evolve a thing majestic in its admonitions, grand in its simplicity. The qualifications which frequently invest the façade of a prison with far more dignity than is found in the façade of a palace double its size lent to this heath a sublimity in which spots renowned for beauty of the accepted kind are utterly wanting. Fair prospects wed happily with fair times: but alas if times be not fair! Men have oftener suffered from the mockery of a place too smiling for their reason than from the oppression of surroundings sadly overtinged. Haggard Egdon appealed to a subtler and scarcer instinct, to a more recently learnt emotion, than that which responds to the sort of beauty called charming and fair."*

As of Egdon Heath, so of Portland—still, despite its derricks and oil-tanks, an island of enchantment.

Hugh Casson



# DESIGN REVIEW

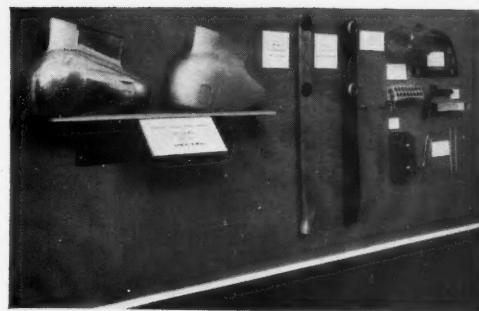
The war, going as it does, all parties are getting impatient to see at least the foundations laid of a reconstruction programme. Discussions appear in dailies, weeklies, monthlies, pamphlets. Opposing interests fight their battles. And as a result of all this activity, a good example, it may be observed, of democratic method, the worst misconceptions of such terms as standardization and prefabrication are beginning to disappear. They are less applied to the complete human container than to the elements of construction and above all the elements of equipment. It has been conclusively proved (for instance in the February 1943 issue) that standardization of domestic appliances would result in an enormous saving of materials and labour, a surprising drop in costs and a considerable rise in the standard of design.

It is chiefly in connection with this particular point of view that the problems of design for everyday things have once more come to the fore. Modern Equipment had a sudden boom from 1935 to 1937 when five or six books were published at the same time, and several large exhibitions were held. The interest flagged once more and Fashion and Decoration papers began to talk about period revivals. Now however, and perhaps on a more solid foundation, debates have started again, chiefly around the Board of Trade's wartime activities which have (with one exception) proved sadly uninspired. It is a great pity that the Board of Trade has not followed a visual policy as enlightened as that of the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Food and some other Government Departments. Recent letters to the papers *à propos* utility goods have shown a hideous lack of understanding of what the utility problem is really about. The word utility was badly chosen from the beginning. Standard furniture would have been better than utility furniture. The utility wedding-rings, as the Board of Trade officially called them, showed up this terminological inexactitude.

But while public effort has so far produced deplorably little of good design in the accepted sense, and while private enterprise has not been able to put new ranges of goods into the market, there is among designers and manufacturers a much livelier activity everywhere than meets the eye. The foundation by a group of advertisers of Herbert Read's Design Research Unit was a significant symptom. It was followed by John Gloag's *The Missing Technician*. Concurrently the Dartington and Nuffield Trustees have been working on their comprehensive Report on the future of the Visual Arts, including Industrial Design. Other preparations are going on behind locked doors in the studios of the manufacturers. When the war is over they all want to come out with new patterns, and these will have had much more time than usual to mature. For manufacturers do know that design influences sales, even if not necessarily the best design produces the best sales.

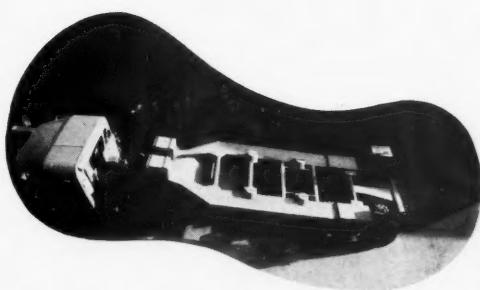
THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW has been waging the battle for modern industrial design since the last war. The 1935 Christmas number is still one of the most fully illustrated records of what Britain before this war had achieved in the field of modern equipment. The time now seems to be ripe for something in the nature of a monthly bulletin from the Design Front. This is what the Design Review is meant to be. It will consist of photographs of new and significant objects and, whenever an occasion offers itself, special articles on new materials, or new uses of old materials, or new methods, or questions of design organization, design education, public collections of design, etc., etc. The objects shown may be designer-designed or—such as those illustrated this month—anonymously designed, by some engineering department not consciously concerned with aesthetic values, or by nobody in particular. They may be British or foreign, mass-produced or produced on a small scale, and they may be machine-produced or hand-produced, although the craftsman's work will as a rule only be considered on its laboratory value for wider production. Some of the objects on the following pages and in the following numbers, though well known to many, are not usually looked at for their visual qualities. Others are not yet in production; still others, though manufactured on the largest scale, are not for the general public. The conditions under which these objects are used or distributed is, however, immaterial. What is wanted just now is that the designer's sense of the significance of functional and imaginative form should be kept alive through the lean period, and that some sort of focus should be provided for his problems and activities. It is hoped that the Design Review will provide this.

It is hoped also that it will provide against a danger which is likely to be a real one after the war. All the signs go to show that there will be a more catholic, a more liberal interpretation of the functionalist creed which, whatever anyone may say, has been the backbone of the modern movement. Now as soon as such a liberal interpretation of the modern creed is attempted, a more catholic appreciation of other creeds and their results in terms of design will follow. The new (and no doubt growing) feeling for Victorian rococo is a case in point. But just because this REVIEW has been influential to some extent in fostering a wider tolerance, it may claim the right to sound a caution. Real appreciation does not arouse the desire to plagiarize. An essential part of true catholicity of taste and judgment is the ability to appreciate one's own age, as well as others, to be sensitive not merely to its real qualities but to the limitations inherent in its structure, in the exploitation of which lies its hope of fulfilment. Indeed it is perhaps the greatest benefit bestowed by a catholic outlook, that it enables one, by being allergic to no period, to distinguish the peculiar qualities of one's own. From the fact that we are able to enjoy a Gothic garden seat, a rustic titling type face, or a fir-cone porch, it does not follow that we want to re-create them. On the contrary, we like them because they cannot be re-created. They are nice because they are *not* modern, but unless there was something modern to pit them against, they wouldn't be nice at all. The condition of a wide latitude of taste is sincerity—even narrowness—of performance. This bulletin is—amongst other things—designed to be a monthly reminder to that effect.



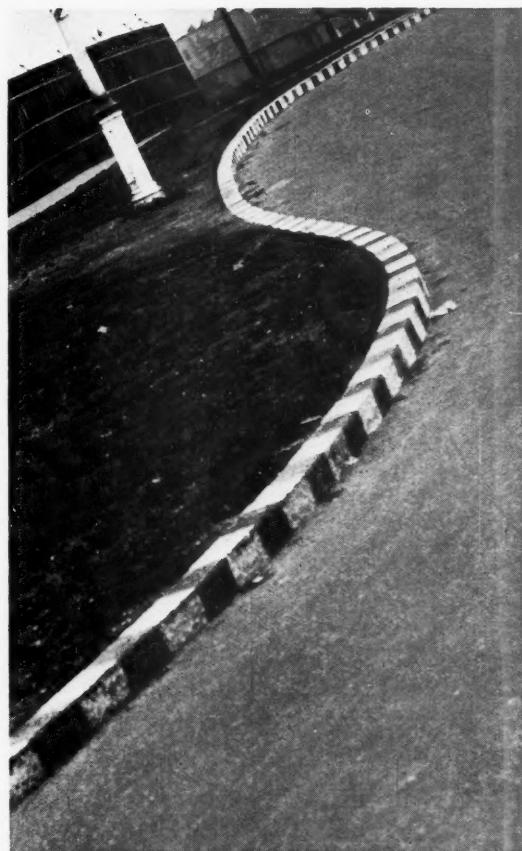
1

Anonymous design—a typical screen from the Ministry of Supply's Economy Exhibition (designed by B. Katz). The exhibition was consciously designed, many of the objects shown were not. The illustration shows the use of alternative materials to replace metal alloys in aircraft landing wheel fairings and other aircraft parts.



2

A Scammell tank carrier showing the direct and forth-right approach to design in a highly efficient vehicle.



3

Black and white—the simplest of visual warnings, at the same time forcefully emphasizing shape. (Photo Peter Ray).



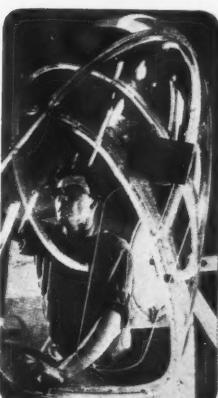
4

Old and new London bus headlamps and masks—on the left the type of mask fitted in 1940 to the existing headlamp, on the right the improved type of combined headlamp and mask in one unit, now being mass produced. The new design improves the spread of light without exceeding the permissible intensity of illumination.



5

American aircraft sound detector (from The Architectural Forum).



6

Nose of a Martin bomber, made of Lucite plastic—a strictly functional, economical design, yet of a visual distinction as though designed by a Gabo (from The Architectural Forum).



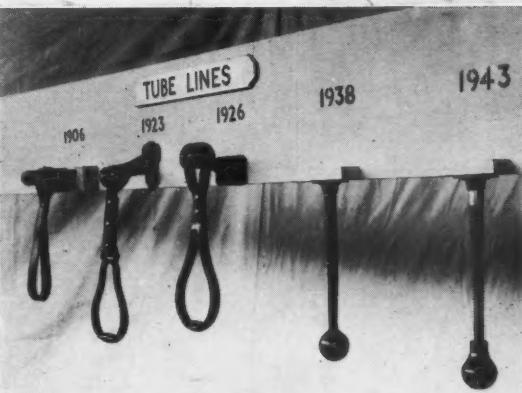
7

Collapsible eye-shield for war-dens—again an emergency product, and again visually stimulating in the same sense as a piece of Moholy-Nagy sculpture. (Photo Peter Ray).



8

The development of the strap: anonymous design tested and improved by public use. The illustrations from the Railway Gazette show straps used on London Underground lines. The 1938 moulded rubber type is now replaced by the new spring strap which consists of a high tensile woven cord with helical spring surround and plastic knob.





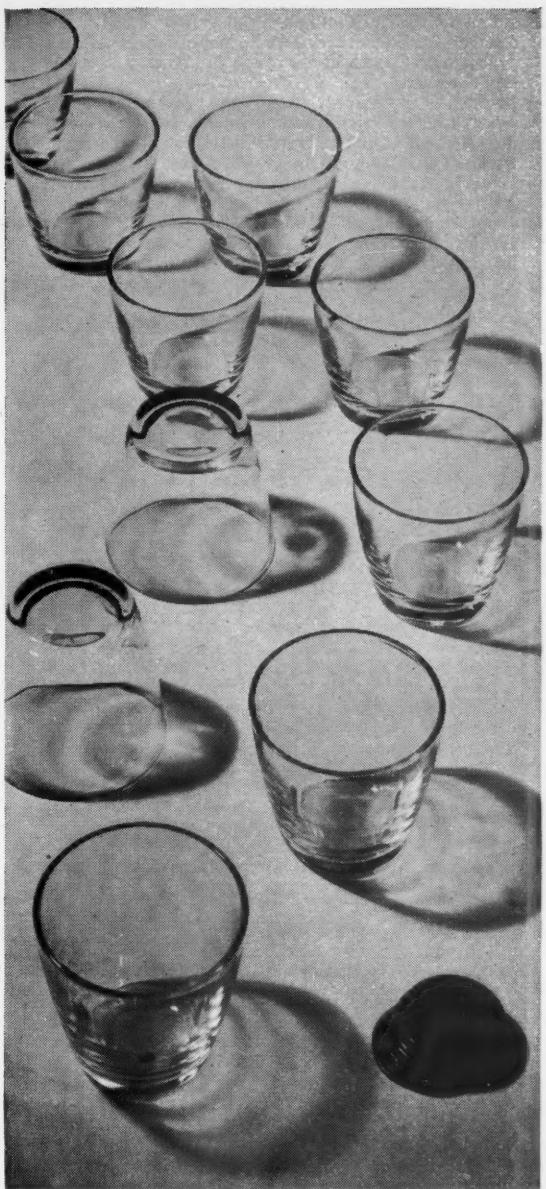
9

Plastic cruet set produced for the Ministry of Works for use in industrial hostels; the pepper pot is about 4 in. high. (Photo Peter Ray).



10

G.E.C. raft light, designed to hang horizontally on the stern of a ship's life-saving raft, and to light automatically by means of a spiral gravity switch made on the "egg whisk" principle when thrown into the water. (Photo Peter Ray).



11

Pressed glass whiskey tots 2½" high manufactured by Chance Bros., Ltd. Designed since the war, they are still obtainable from retailers, although at present they are not being made owing to a Board of Trade limitation of production order. They are a most excellent design and their simple shape lends itself easily to quantity production. (Photo Dell and Wainwright).



12

Moorcroft utility pottery, an example of the high standard of design attainable within utility regulations. Why have not many more such achievements come on to the market? (Photo Peter Ray).

## BOOKS

### The Scot Russified

CHARLES CAMERON. By Georges Loukomski. Nicholson & Watson and The Commodore Press. 21s.

THE Princess Romanovsky - Pavlovsky's Preface, Professor Talbot Rice's Introduction, and the Editor's Historical Notes to this slim volume, reveal that the primary motive which promoted it was to claim on the part of an ally some cultural (for lack of any other) affinity between the western and eastern poles of European civilization. This factor—and the fairly anomalous aristocratic bias of it—need not underestimate our debt to M. Loukomski for a real contribution to the history of architectural studies. It is fortunate that so many and excellent illustrations were available of Cameron's masterpieces, the chief of which have, according to official accounts, been destroyed or severely damaged in recent battles.

In this book there is enough material to show how Charles Cameron was indeed an artist of major importance. M. Loukomski's researches have in some measure set to rights the shortcomings of the *Dictionary of Architecture* and the *Dictionary of National Biography*, for in neither of these works of reference is there any mention of Cameron's name at all. Cameron was a near contemporary of Robert Adam with whom it is natural to compare his style. Now Russia, in spite of her vast appetite for western artists, seldom fails thoroughly to digest them. In the eighteenth century she successively assimilated, amongst architects, the Italian Rastrelli, and the French de Thomon, so that their national prefixes paled before the works of their own hands. We see that even the Scottish Cameron's dogged individualism did not altogether resist the formidable pressure under which his contemporaries' native traditionalism had succumbed. The outcome in his case is certainly one we need not regret. In the use of his adopted materials alone, the agate and porphyry entablatures, the mauve and pistachio porcelain columns, the capitals of ormolu and ceilings and walls of milky glass, Cameron's native genius was happy to indulge in a world of dreamlike qualities unknown to his great compatriot.

Little is known of Cameron's early life. Like Adam he was the cadet of an old Scottish family, and like Adam he went as a young man to Italy to study architecture at the source. In 1772 he published his "Baths of the Romans," a work still consulted by architectural students in this country. It made his reputation, for in 1779 Catharine the Great lured him to Russia at the age of about thirty-nine. Until the death of the Empress he retained her unbounded confidence and encouragement. With her successors he was not quite so blessed.

Cameron's advent to Russia coincided with Catharine's strong personal reaction against the heavy baroque of the reigning Rastrelli. She learnt to relish the more restrained classicism of the handsome Scotsman to whom she gave a free hand at her existing palace of Tsarskoe Selo. It is here and notably in the Cameron Gallery extension that Cameron's best work was to be found. At Pavlovsk, in spite of the beauty of the final achievement, Cameron suffered the mistrust of the Grand Duke Paul and Marie Federovna, and the active interference of his rival, Brenna, was apparent in the result.

About 1800 Cameron was back in England. By this time Robert Adam was dead. In 1801, however, Cameron had returned to Russia, and was engaged chiefly upon administrative works of a lesser consequence. He died in 1812.

The Adam influence therefore upon Cameron was necessarily of the early and best Adam, the more robust Adam of Hatchlands, Shardeloes and Kedleston. M. Loukomski makes a comparison between Cameron's Hall (1780) at Pavlovsk and Adam's famous Great Hall at Kedleston (1760's). From the purely constructional point of view, this comparison is probably one of the closest. Here the similarity in columniation, ceilings and wall

niches allows a just estimate of Cameron's adaptations of the Roman that show no falling-off from Adam's in quality, restraint or even detail. At the same time in the Pavlovsk Hall the decorative stamp—and it is as a decorative artist I believe Cameron to be supereminent—is unimitative and frankly individual. As an example of this the green dining-room at Tsarskoe shows a strength of character in wall decoration less conventionalized than Adam's and more thoroughbred. In short, Cameron adapted the Roman tradition as transmitted through Inigo Jones and the great English post-Palladians with more conviction if no less originality than did his better known contemporary. In this revival of the Roman tradition and in his interpretation of it lies Cameron's chief contribution to Russian architecture.

J. LEES-MILNE

### Probing Public Opinion

URBAN PLANNING AND PUBLIC OPINION. By M. C. Branch, Jr. Bureau of Urban Research, Princeton University. September, 1942. 1 dollar.

THIS preliminary study is an interesting example of the use of public opinion sampling in investigating questions of urban planning and reconstruction. The field is a new one. Hence, the value of the study—the first nationwide sample on this subject to be taken in the United States—must consist mainly in providing a guide to future and more elaborate investigations. Nevertheless the results themselves are of considerable interest.

The survey covered a representative sample of 2,490 adult white urban residents in the United States. In the main, the questions asked were concerned with the attitude towards owning homes, the desirability of improvements in the neighbourhood, satisfaction with the neighbourhood, and, conversely, the desire to move elsewhere. The results show that 86 per cent. of those owning their homes were glad they did so, while 60 per cent. of those paying rent would prefer to own their homes, the major factors in favour of ownership being a combination of security or stability provided by ownership and possession, with a desire for independence. Except for the small sample of persons on relief, the desire to own does not appear to vary in any significant way with economic status. Satisfaction with the existing neighbourhood was fairly general. Even among the lowest economic groups (which included families on relief) about 50 per cent. of the respondents stated that given their choice (though it is not clear what free choice means in this case) they would prefer to live in the given neighbourhood rather than move elsewhere, while among the upper group (with incomes of 60 dollars a week and over) 78 per cent. would not wish to move from their present neighbourhood. This seems largely due to the fact that the respondents wished to live among the kind of people who were their present neighbours. Such attitudes would have a very important bearing on rehousing schemes. On the other hand there was a widespread desire for neighbourhood improvement—59 per cent. of respondents indicated developments which would benefit and improve their neighbourhood, as against 39 per cent. who had no active desire for improvements and 2 per cent. who gave no answer to the particular question.

The enquiry also showed, as is to be expected, that the disturbing elements in the existing neighbourhoods were greater among the lowest economic groups than among the upper ones. Such factors as noise, distance from elementary and secondary schools, lack of cleanliness of area, and lack of provision of park and playground space, were most evident in the neighbourhoods inhabited by the lowest economic groups.

The Princeton study obviously has a number of limitations. In the first place, the analysis is excessively elaborate and detailed, having regard to the size of the sample and the brief range of questions. Secondly, insufficient scope was given to free answers, though some of the questions were designed for this purpose. Thirdly, the classification of those free answers obtained was

somewhat primitive, especially in the case of the question as to why the respondents liked or disliked their neighbourhood. Finally, the study concentrates too much on broad urban planning and avoids any detailed consideration of people's homes. Nevertheless it shows the articulateness of attitudes on these topics and, undoubtedly, some of the indications given in the study have a general application.

D. V. GLASS

### A Timber Textbook

BRITISH TIMBERS. By E. H. B. Boulton & B. Alwyn Jay. A. & C. Black. 12s. 6d.

A PURELY technical reference book, on almost any subject, can so easily become dull to expert and layman alike. This is certainly not the case with *British Timbers*, which it is both easy to read and informative. Moreover it contains, in spite of the paper difficulties, some excellent reproductions. The authors, in their Preface, state that their intention was to give an outline of some of the more important aspects of British trees and timbers. It is obviously impossible to cover the whole subject of forestry, timber structure and properties of wood in one or even half a dozen volumes, and the difficulty lies in the selection of data in order of importance, and the emphasis given to points included. In this respect the authors undoubtedly have been successful. The presentation of the data is both methodical and clear.

A series of line drawings, systematically compiled, of the cellular structure of timber will assist the amateur wood anatomist considerably, as the usual microphotographs tend to be misleading.

A particularly excellent feature of the book is the section containing thirty reproductions of our most useful timbers, which incidentally enable one to compare the rate of growth of different species. There is, however, no mention of the fact that these photographs are actually full size.

It can be presumed that Messrs. Boulton and Jay's book will principally be of interest to the landowner, as the amount of home-grown timber available to the timber user in the immediate post-war years is likely to be negligible owing to heavy felling in recent years. The landowner will find valuable data on the type of soil, exposure, rate of growth, etc., for the various species of commercial timbers. It is only a pity that no kiln schedules had been included. The architect-technician, who is mainly concerned with the structural use of timber, would probably also wish to see some tables of strength for the more common species. The omission of such schedules and tables may easily be due to the fact that this information has been compiled by the state-financed Forest Products Research Station, and that its reprinting by private individuals would therefore entail difficulties. Would it be possible, one wonders, to obtain permission for a reprint of this important information in the next edition of the book?

C. SJÖSTRÖM

### SHORTER NOTICES

THE BEAUTIES OF SCENERY. By Vaughan Cornish. Frederick Muller. 6s.

Dr. Cornish is a geographer and looks at scenery from the geographer's point of view. That means a fresh point of view probably to most readers. One opens the book with high hopes for that reason—perhaps with hopes unfairly high. For the book, illustrated, though not spectacularly illustrated, is a primer and meant as nothing more than that. The chapter headings are promising: Sky, Land and Water, Vegetation, then two chapters on The Scenery of Civilization, and finally one with the tantalizing title Indoor Scenery. The latter turns out to be a curious medley of interior planning and decoration, leading through the centuries to the author's "to-day," which is Neo-Georgian. There are in this chapter also odd paragraphs on silverware, carpets and the printed page.

After that one is eager to see what might be found in the chapters on urban scenery. It is, alas, the same

there. A loose structure, excursions into many periods and many lands, without apparent system, but pleasant if somewhat elementary ("The period which we call ancient history was at its prime of civilization in the second century A.D."). However, not everything in the book is so obvious. Acute observations of topical import are not missing, for instance, the lack in the City of London of "off-setting contrast in colour and texture," and the failure of the Office of Works in preserving ruins with anything like their former picturesque atmosphere. The tearing down of climbing plants exposing the stonework "in naked disfigurement" is rightly opposed. Not many as yet are susceptible to this sacrifice of aesthetic to antiquarian values. With such comments and its wide range of examples the book will make a good eye-opener to, say, the schoolmaster who is beginning to realize that the visual approach to town and country will have a higher place in post-war education, and does not know how to find his way towards it.

THE HOME COUNTIES. By S. P. B. Mais. B. T. Batsford, 1943. 10s. 6d.

The *Face of Britain* series of Batsford's has been a spectacular success, one is told, partly owing to their wealth of usually excellent photographs, and partly owing to the tenor of those texts which avoid the archaeological textbook character on the one hand, and the guidebook character on the other. Mr. Mais's *Home Counties* is not one of these. Of Stoke d'Abernon, e.g. you read, "Luckily some of the south Saxon wall is preserved, as well as the Saxon square-headed blocked-up doorway which formed, high up, the entrance to a priest's chamber, and the Saxon sun-dial. There is a fine mural painting, and the Norbury chantry was put up in the reign of Henry VII. There is an original fire-place in the north wall," and so on. Now that is entirely *Little Guides* style, that is frankly topographical without an attempt at coherence of theme which we have a right to expect in a book on (as against a Traveller's Guide to) the home counties.

FOUR LECTURES ON DESIGN, delivered at meetings of the Design and Industries Association. Hutchinson & Co. Is.

There is nearly always something unsatisfactory about the publication of a symposium, especially if, like the one under review, it consists of only four contributions with a total of thirty-two pages, and appears with a paper cover. Will such a pamphlet reach the public it should? Who will read it, and who keep it? And are not the individual papers bound to disappear, almost hopeless to trace later on, even by the well-versed library user, and even at the British Museum. Yet this D.I.A. pamphlet contains an address by Herbert Read which is the best, most mature statement he has so far made on industrial design, a statement beautifully worded and beautifully balanced, wise and somewhat resigned, though not without optimism.

Of the other three lectures (by Henry Strauss, Francis Meynell, and Tom Harrison) Francis Meynell's deserves special mention as a glittering exposition of the past and present of good printing.

HOUSE CONSTRUCTION (Post-War Building Studies No. I). By an Interdepartmental Committee appointed by the Minister of Health, the Secretary of State for Scotland and the Minister of Works. H.M. Stationery Office, 1944. 2s.

The first report has come out of the Interdepartmental (Burt) Committee on House Construction, perhaps the most important of the study committees working within the framework of the Ministry of Works Post-War Building Directorate. It is a document of about 150 pages, thorough and well put together, and will no doubt be highly useful. Its main theme is methods of house construction, alternative to the traditional ones. It is treated in two chief parts, the first dealing with technical considerations of strength, stability, heat insulation, waterproofing, etc., the second with descriptions, illustrations, and comments on non-traditional methods used between the two wars. In this lies the serious limitation of the report. If architects expect to find notes on American or Swedish or German prefabricated housing, or for that matter on the experiments now going on in Britain, they will be disappointed. The Ministry of Works experimental houses now in course of erection at Northolt are based, it is true, on the report. But they are, it is obvious, not amongst the most progressive types. When will the Ministry give us guidance on those most recent methods which will, in fact, be the determining factor in success or failure of the post-war building campaign?

## Bomb Damage in Germany

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW has over the last two or three years published illustrated accounts of bomb damage to notable buildings in Britain, accounts which were in the end assembled into a book on *The Bombed Buildings of Britain*. Then, when bomb damage decreased in this country and began in other parts of Europe, lists were obtained from the War Office, first of damage in Sicily, then in Southern Italy. These were printed *in toto* in the March and April numbers, and apparently in no other papers. Now the turn has come for Germany. Bomb damage to notable buildings in Germany has been mentioned in British and American papers on many occasions. The information was taken from German or neutral newspapers.

The following is a summing-up of damage to about the Autumn of 1943. Wherever possible English and neutral reports have been counterchecked from German papers. The results are in no way final, partly because there seem to be a good many contradictions in the various reports, partly because since the beginning of the great Anglo-American air offensive last autumn German papers have been rigorously prevented from printing any details of damage. Two examples may be quoted to illustrate these limitations of the following list. Of Cologne Cathedral the *Münchner Neuesten Nachrichten* said, on November 6-7, "This time it was especially the south and the magnificent west sides that were hit. Large pieces were torn out . . . and there are gushing breaches in the left aisle." However, on March 13 this year *Stockholm Tidningen* printed that "Cologne Cathedral has suffered hardly any damage." So it must be left to readers to form their own picture. We know how loosely casual observers sometimes talk, but on the other hand, it is quite possible that the German press deliberately exaggerates to magnify the Kulturverbrechen of the "air gangsters." One thing is certain. If this exaggeration had been Nazi policy in the beginning, it is no longer so. If we read of the attacks of the last months on such relatively small towns as Brunswick, Augsburg, Aachen, etc., the never varying German report: "There was damage to residential areas, schools, hospitals and buildings of

## How to Keep a Canary

The selection of cages will always be a matter of taste ; but for all practical purposes, it should be remembered that little ornamentation or expense is necessary. The Rev. Francis Smith in his book says : "They may be too small or too large, too ornamental or too elaborate in their workmanship, and in either or all of these cases they do not answer the purpose required. If a cage be too small it is cruel to the bird you desire to pet, while if it be too large, a single bird will not only appear lost in it, but in all probability it will have the effect of making him less disposed to treat you with his song. On the other hand, if a cage be too elaborate and ornamental in its design and workmanship, the effect will be to fasten the attention rather on the casket than on the jewel it is meant to enshrine. Since the first Great Exhibition in Hyde Park we have had bird-cages of every form and description. Swiss Cottages, Chinese pagodas, Gothic churches, and Indian temples, with their painted domes and minarets, all doing great credit to the taste and enterprise of our workers in tin, but utterly unadapted to the purpose required. To do this satisfactorily we maintain that the cage should always be subordinate to the bird, and its main object be to set off to the greatest advantage the plumage of the latter, and just in proportion as it does this will it come up to our beau ideal of what a cage should be. Whenever we see a beautiful canary imprisoned in one of these gorgeously got up gimcracks of zinc, we always feel very much what an artist in some picture exhibition, standing near his own production to hear the criticisms of the public, may be supposed to feel, as he hears some unsophisticated party exclaim : 'Oh, my ! what a beautiful frame ! ' No, this is surely putting the cart before the horse, and therefore at once disposes of all these pretty toys, as fit and proper habitations for our pet. No one who has had a bird fit to be called a canary will ever hide him in one of these, whilst those who possess the lowest kind of the species only will hardly think them to be worthy of so expensive a domicile.

" For single birds the two cages we should recommend are the japanned bell-shaped cage, and the plain square white tinned sort. The former is light, airy and elegant, and answers well for a single bird, who always looks well in it. It has the recommendation of being easily cleaned, and of affording the least possible screen for those pests and scourges of the canary, red-lice. The only drawback is, that its shape precludes it from being hung up against a wall, but for a stand, or to be suspended from a ceiling nothing can be better for the purpose. In this, as in all other wares, there are inferior kinds, of which I would fain put my readers on their guard, for the cheaper imitations of the real article being badly japanned and painted with the worst of paint, and therefore easily picked off, as we have experienced to our sorrow, are often the unsuspected cause of ill-health and death of many a valued and valuable bird. Of course the only way to guard against this disaster is to go to the best makers, or the leading bird-dealers, who are sure to patronise the best articles.

" But the cage to set off a canary to the greatest advantage, and which therefore we recommend before all others, is the plain square-topped cage, made of white tin wire without any wood-work at all, except the bottom, which should be of polished ebony, or at least, if of other wood, stained black. This suits alike all birds of whatever colour they may be, but we need hardly say sets off the pale yellow or the deep orange to the very greatest advantage. It is far beyond the common mahogany, as any one may judge for himself if he will only contrast any substance of red and yellow together, beside yellow and black. All fanciers when they wish to exhibit their birds to a purchaser or otherwise, invariably use a black cage and not a mahogany one, which speaks for itself. And yet how few such cages do you see exhibited for sale ; if you wish for one, it is ten to one that you will have specially to order it, and yet its greater superiority for exhibiting a canary off to the best advantage over all the japanned pagodas and Swiss cottages that ever were made is beyond dispute, and requires only to be seen to be at once admitted."

RICHARD AVIS (*The Canary, Its History, Varieties, Management and Breeding*, 1872).



Montecassino, founded about 528, the mother-house of all Western monasticism, fell a victim to the war last February. The buildings were mostly Renaissance and Baroque. The cloisters illustrated are wrongly ascribed to Bramante. They were begun in 1515. The interior of the church was in the most sumptuous Baroque, begun in 1649 and finally consecrated in 1727. The decoration was by Luca Giordano, Solimena and other Neapolitan painters. It is to be hoped that the Germans had removed the precious illuminated manuscripts and the Byzantine bronze doors of 1066 before making of the monastery a centre of their defence.

cultural importance" must cover a good many losses of a kind that during the blitz over Britain were published in detail and with photographs by the Ministry of Information.

**ABBREVIATIONS.**—D.R.: *Das Reich*; E.N.Z.: *Essener National Zeitung*; F.Z.: *Frankfurter Zeitung*; H.F.: *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*; K.Z.: *Kölnische Zeitung*; M.N.N.: *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*; V.B.: *Völkischer Beobachter*.

**AACHEN:** Cathedral hit (D.R., 25.7.43), Town Hall with the Rethel wall paintings destroyed (V.B., 15.7.43).

**ALTONA:** Town Hall destroyed (M.N.N., 6.9.43).

**BERLIN:** Hedwigskirche and Opera destroyed (M.N.N., 30.5.43). Zeughaus: picture of burnt-out room (H.F., 2.12.43). Royal Palace, Royal Stables, State Library, Schinkelhaus hit (M.N.N., 30.5.43). Garrison Church badly damaged (H.F., 2.12.43). Of public collections the National Gallery (M.N.N., 30.5.43) and the Kronprinzen Palace (Basler Nat. Ztg., 14.3.44) were mentioned, the first as hit, the second as destroyed.

**BREMEN:** Many old houses destroyed, losses suffered by the museum (H.F., 17.9.42).

**CARLSRUHE:** Palace and State Library destroyed (M.N.N., 30.5.43).

**CASSEL:** Cathedral, Red Palace and State Library destroyed (M.N.N., 30.5.43).

**COLOGNE:** Cathedral (left transept

destroyed, also Baptismal Chapel and some sculpture, F.Z., 30.6.43. Altar of the Magi destroyed, V.B., 2.7.43. South and west side exterior hit, M.N.N., 6-7.11.43). Church of the Apostles, St. Gereon, St. Mary in Capitol, St. Mary in Lyskirchen, Gross St. Martin's, St. Pantaleon, St. Severin, St. Ursula—all totally destroyed (M.N.N., 30.5.43 and K.Z., 2.6.43). Town Hall destroyed with its sculptures, Gürzenich, Zeughaus (F.Z., 30.6.43), Fassbinderzunft-Haus, Tempelhaus, Haus Saleck, Houses in the Filzengraben—altogether about half the pre-nineteenth-century houses of Cologne destroyed (E.N.N., 11.11.42). Museums: Losses to the Wallraf-Richartz Museum, the Rheinisches Museum and the Rautenstrauch Museum (E.N.N., 11.11.42).

**DORTMUND:** St. Rainald's, St. Peter's, Propsteichurch, Town Hall destroyed; Library, Kunsthause damaged (M.N.N., 30.5.43).

**DUISBURG:** Liebfrauen Church, Salvator Church, destroyed; Town Hall damaged (M.N.N., 30.5.43).

**DUSSELDORF:** Art Academy, Kunsthalle, damaged (M.N.N., 30.5.43).

**ESSEN:** Cathedral, destroyed (M.N.N., 30.5.43).

**FRANKFURT:** St. Nicholas, Saalhof, Goethehaus, severely damaged; Haus Lichtenstein burnt out (H.F., 12.12.43), Braunfels House, Bethmann Palace, Deutsches-Haus destroyed (German Broadcast, 7.10.43).

**HAMBURG:** St. Katherine's and surrounding district (M.N.N., 6.9.43). St. Nicholas (Sir George Gilbert Scott's early work, F.Z., 27.7.43), House of the Patriotische Gesellschaft (H.F., 12.9.43), seventy of the surviving old houses destroyed (M.N.N., 6.9.43), State Library, loss of two-thirds of the books, etc., including the Hamburgensia collection (M.N.N., 6.9.43), Theatres and Concert Garden hit (M.N.N., 6.9.43, and Nya Dagl. Allhanda, 26.7.43).

**HANOVER:** Leineschloss and Opera destroyed (V.B., 29.7.43).

**INNSBRUCK:** Damage to many old houses (M.N.N., 23.12.48).

**JOHANNISBERG:** Castle (M.N.N., 30.5.43).

**LEIPZIG:** Ninety per cent. of the publishing quarter burnt out (Basler Nachr., 28.1.44).

**LUBECK:** Cathedral with monuments, St. Mary with monuments, St. Peter's, many old houses destroyed (M.N.N., 30.5.43). The Memling Altar was saved (D. Neue Tag., 8.5.43), but perished later (V.B., 3.6.43).

**MAINZ:** Cathedral, St. Stephen's, Electoral Palace, Rheinisch-Germanisches Museum almost completely destroyed (M.N.N., 30.5.43).

**MANNHEIM:** Palace, Jesuit Church, Kunsthalle, destroyed, Town Hall damaged (M.N.N., 8.9.43). National Theatre destroyed (M.N.N., 30.5.43).

**MUNICH:** German reports mention damage to Vestry Frauenkirche, Palace, Nymphenburg Palace, University, State Library, Art Academy, Old Pinakothek (M.N.N., 30.5.43), neutral

sources add: St. Michael's and St. Ludwig's destroyed (Svenska Dagbl., 12.3.43) and damage to Glyptothek, and Schack Gallery (Stockh. Tidn., 13.3.43). Later damage: Festsaalbau of the Palace, Opera and National Theatre destroyed (M.N.N., 4.10.43).

**MUNSTER:** Cathedral with sculptures, St. Lambert's tower, Palace, Town Hall destroyed (H.F., 14.10.43).

**NUREMBERG:** Mauthalle burnt out (M.N.N., 30.5.43). Damage to St. Lawrence's (bomb into nave, Kraft's Sakramentshaus destroyed; Deutsches Spiegel, 12.8.43), St. Jacob's, Castle, Town Walls, old houses, Germanisches Museum (M.N.N. 30.5.43).

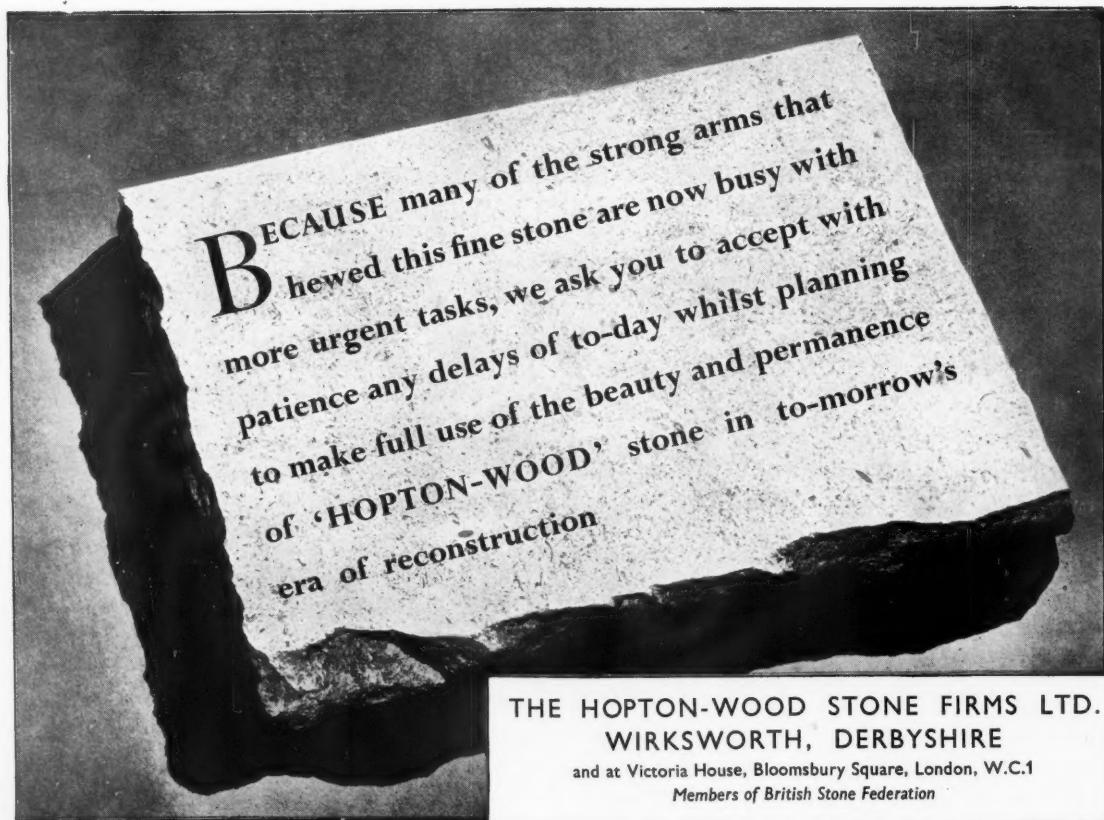
**ROSTOCK:** St. Mary's damaged (V.B., 8.6.43).

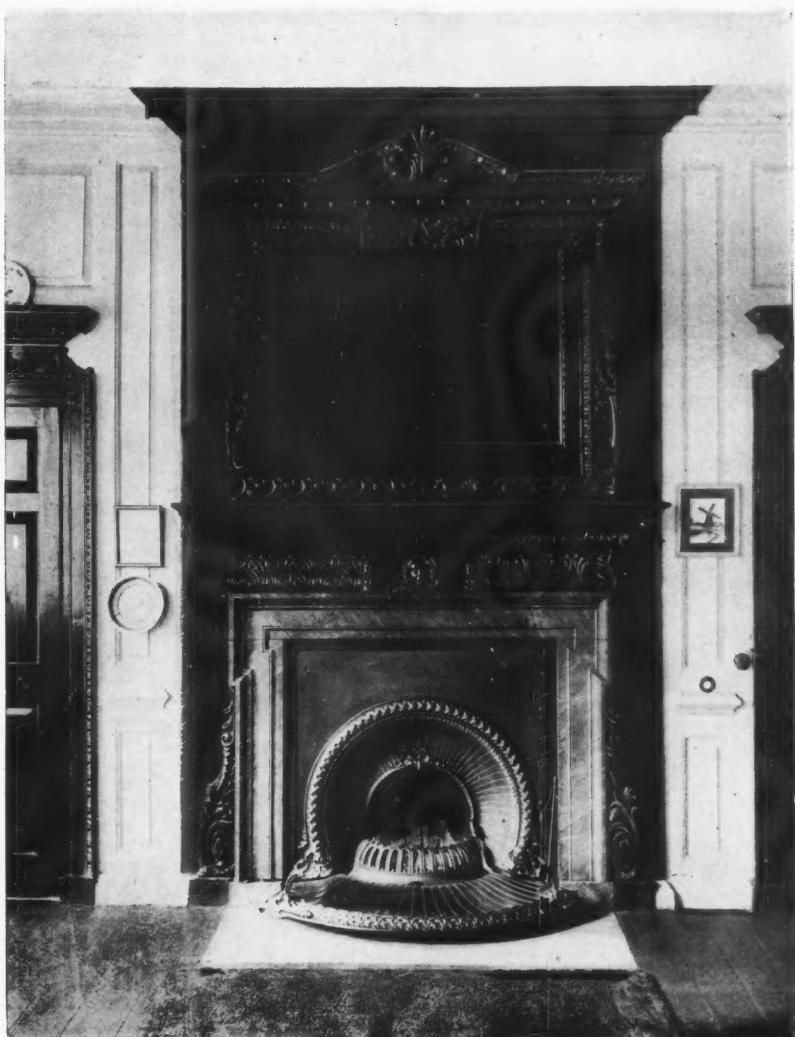
**STUTTGART:** Castle destroyed or damaged (Svenska Dagbl., 13.8.43).

### War Damage in Italy

The pictures on the preceding page are of Montecassino, fallen to the grim necessities of war. The buildings were chiefly of the Baroque. The interior of the church with its Luca Giordano and Solimena decorations was a glorious example of the style. The cloisters wrongly called of Bramante, were in fact designed by Squarcialupi in 1515. There has been a good deal of correspondence in the papers in connection with the destruction of Cassino—the intention of the writers being on the whole to

[continued on page 1]





L. E. Walker, Photo.

CHIMNEY PIECE, 81, HIGH STREET, KING'S LYNN

THIS chimney piece was made in the early years of the 18th century, and the design has every sign of being the work of Henry Bell, the architect of the King's Lynn Custom House. The carved emblems suggest that the room was intended for the practice of music, and it marks the change in social habits that such provision should have been

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continued from page xlviij]

disavow the artistic merits of the architecture. Artistic merits are debatable; what remains an unquestionable fact and has not been sufficiently stressed in the papers is that Montecassino, established by St. Benedict about 528, is the mother monastery of the West, the foundation stone of the whole fabric of Western monasticism.

As for Sicily, the Allied Sub-Commission for Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives has now published a statement on first aid repairs done. At Palermo, in S. Zita the Serpotta sculptures were protected by mending the roof of the oratory. In S. Giuseppe dei Teatini the nave could not yet be roofed in with available means, but the aisles were saved. It is untrue, as has been said in Swiss papers, that the church was razed to the ground. In S. Francesco little could be done. Fortunately Laurana's chapel front was unharmed. In the Olivella church nothing could be done for cupola and north transept; but the nave was walled off and thus protected. In S. Maria della Catena the blown out bays of the north wall are being re-built with the original materials. Altogether six churches and two oratories at Palermo were finished with during December, work was in progress during January on ten churches, one oratory, three

palaces and one museum. Forty other churches were scheduled for minor first aid. In Syracuse repairs have been concluded at five churches, five palaces and one museum.

#### Stanley Casson

Lieutenant-Colonel Stanley Casson, the distinguished archaeologist, was killed on active service shortly before his fifty-fifth birthday. He had been Assistant Director of the British School at Athens after the last war, returned to England in 1922 and was appointed reader in archaeology at Oxford in 1927. His writings are equally divided between scholarly archaeology, more popular art criticism and general matters of humanism. He had served right through the last war, and in this was in Holland when the German army overran the country, and later was again faced with German invasion in Greece and Crete.

#### H. S. Goodhart-Rendel the Generous

Mr. Goodhart-Rendel has presented his house, Hatchlands, Surrey, with 421 acres of land, to the National Trust. Hatchlands was built in the fifties of the eighteenth century. The designer of its brick exterior is unknown. The interior contains the earliest documented decoration by

Robert Adam. He started on its interior in 1759 and finished in 1761. The style, similar to that at Kedleston, is grand and more sumptuous than mature Adam work. The original drawings for Hatchlands are preserved at the Soane Museum.

#### Jane Drew, the Gas Industry and Claridge's

Miss Jane Drew, who some months ago was appointed architectural consultant to the Domestic Heat Services Committee of the Gas Industry, has recently returned from a study tour to the United States, and told her experiences to representatives of the press and others at Claridge's Hotel. She was impressed by the up-to-date equipment of American as against English kitchens, and by the size of the apparatus used. American wives would rather put up with a minimum of working space (and living space) than with inadequate equipment. The refrigerator is as much a matter of course as the motor car. Washing-up machinery and drying machinery is far from rare

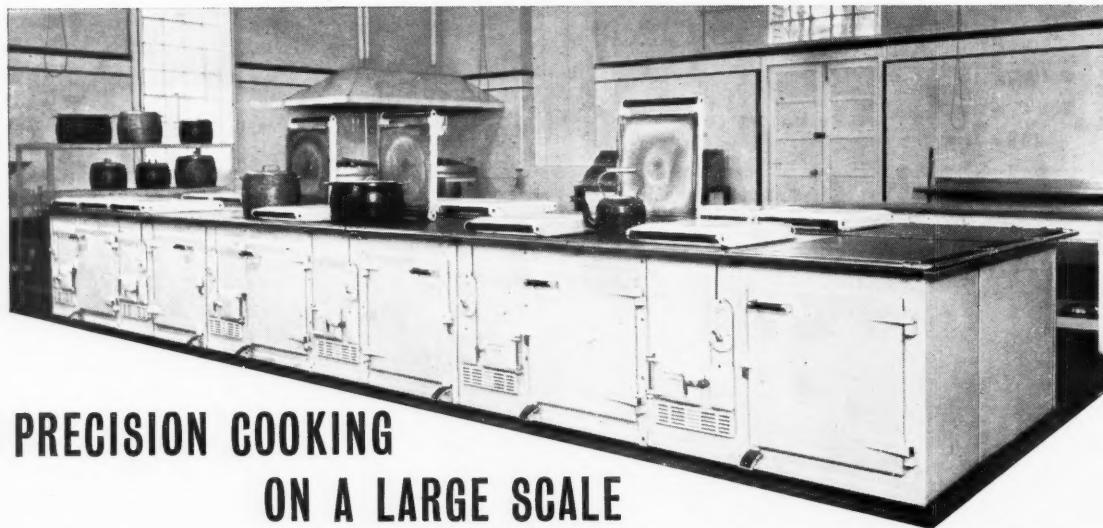
in private households. Much time and energy is obviously saved by all such contrivances. What is it used for by the women of America? What will it be used for if the Gas Industry succeeds in establishing them more firmly over here? Chiefly for seeing yet more films? Miss Drew was silent on this point.

#### Librarianship and Education

The Derbyshire and Notts County Libraries have issued a joint leaflet *Rebuilding Britain*. It is an annotated list of commendable books on planning and building (influenced probably by Mr. Carter's excellent lists) to a total of about sixty books, and about twenty-five pamphlets. Even publications of 1944 are not missing. The net is widely cast, and Julian Huxley's *TVA* is included, just as well as J. M. Richards's *Miniature History of the English House*. The cover is bright, the typography pleasant, and eight illustrations accompany the list. Leaflets of this sort, if as intelligently done as this, can do no end of good. County librarians of other counties—please note.

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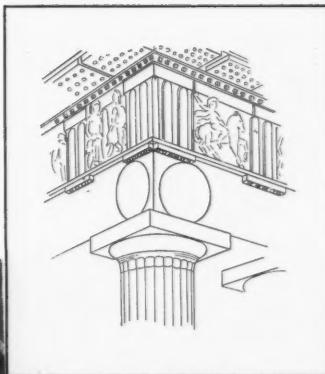


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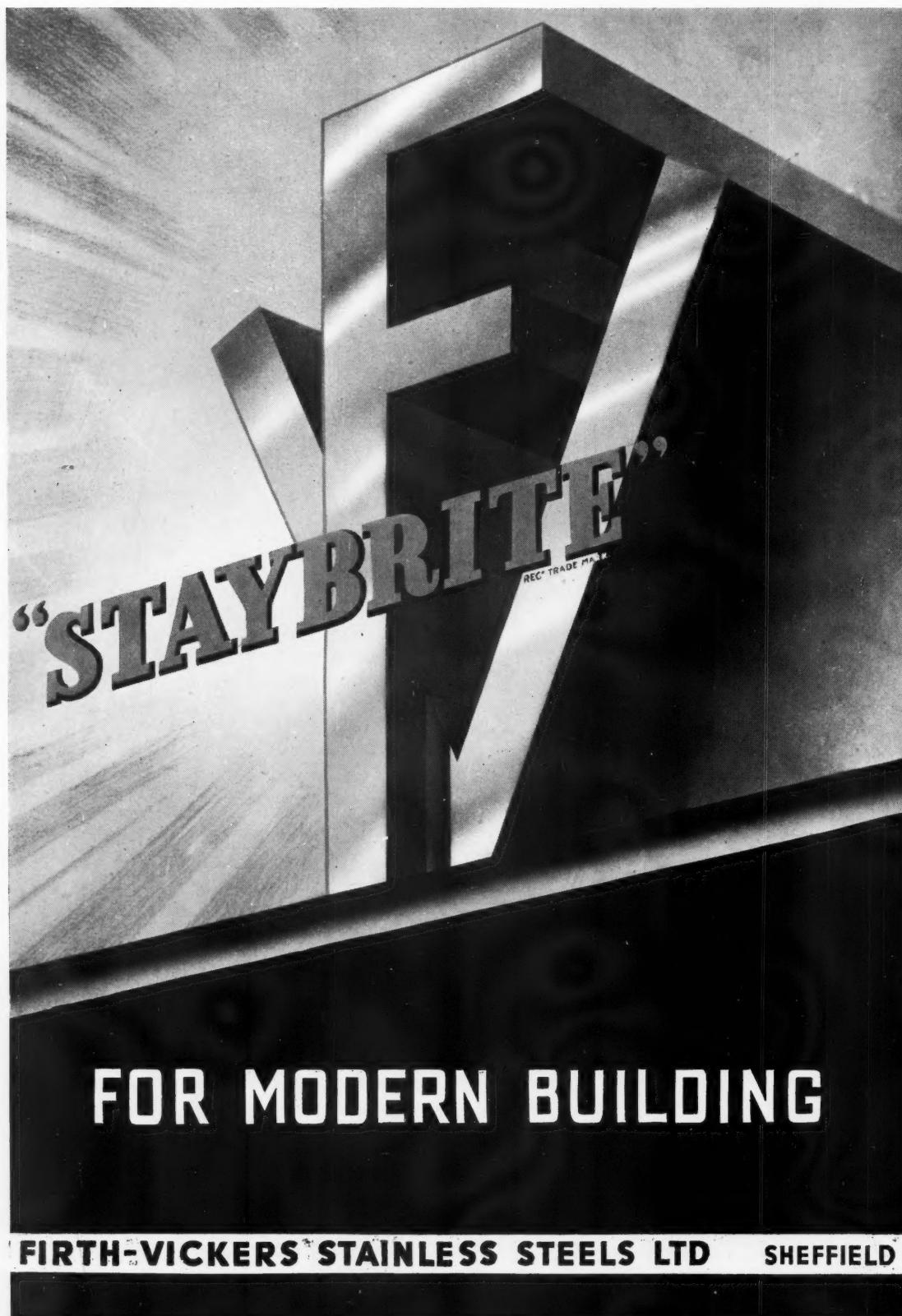


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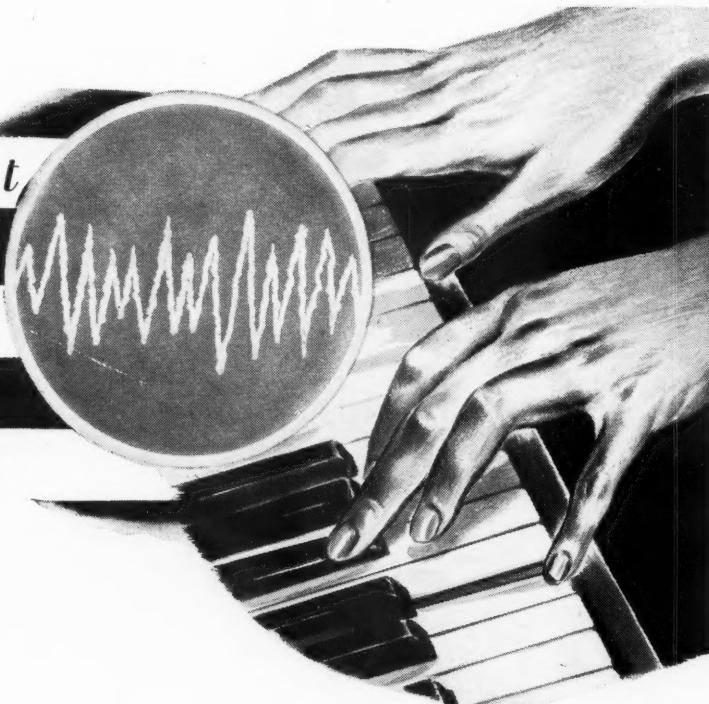
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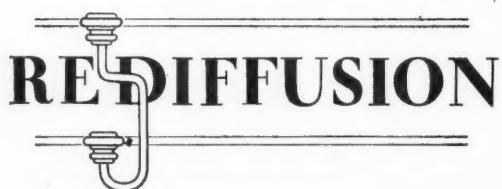


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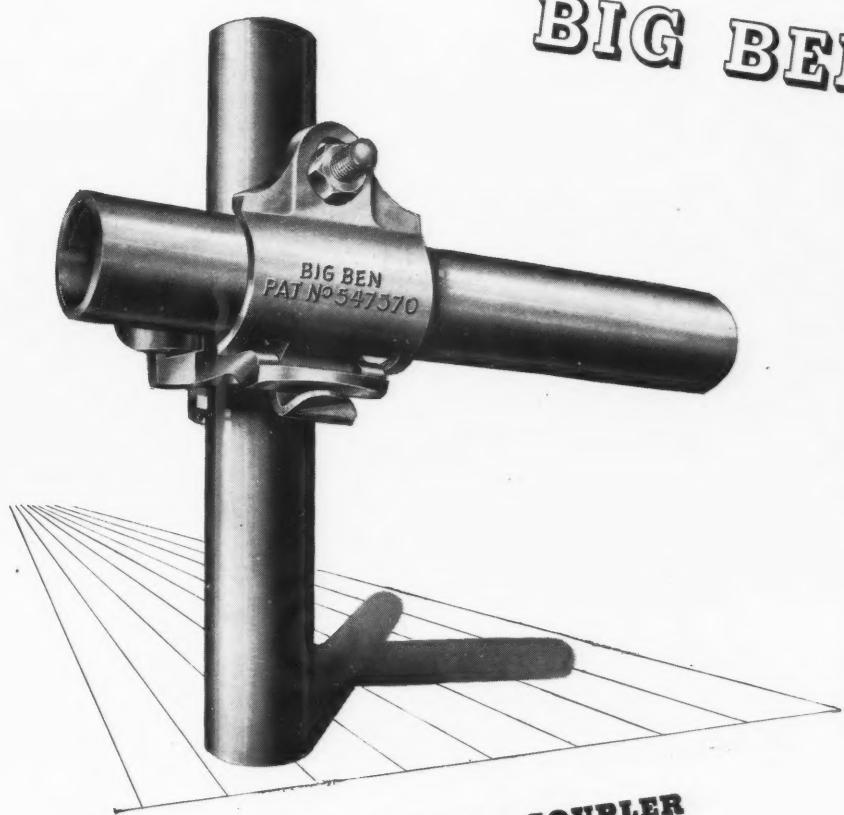
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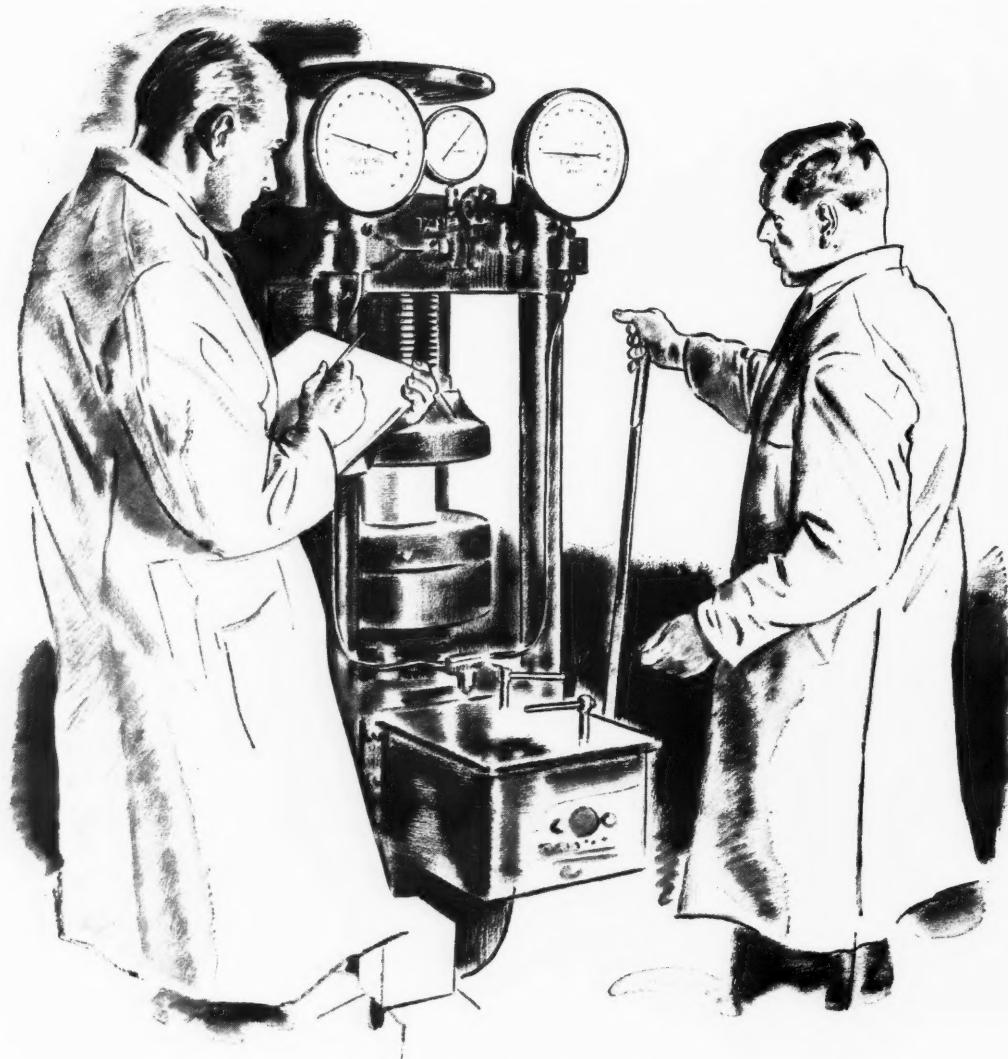
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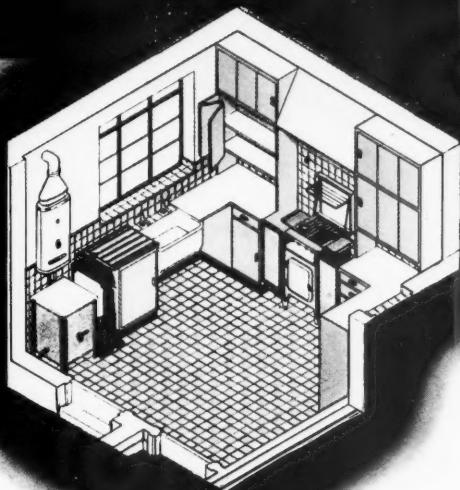
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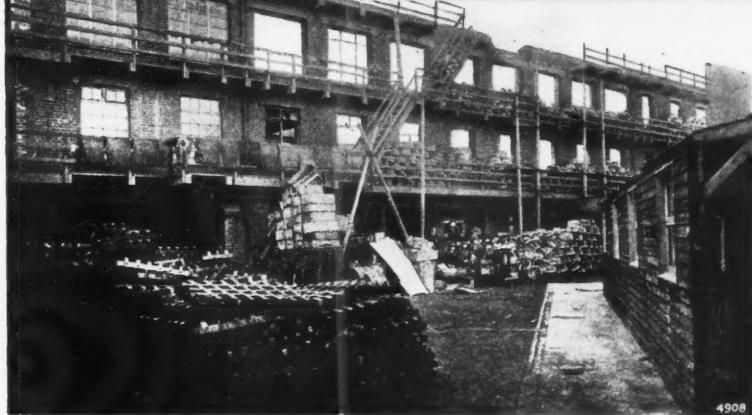
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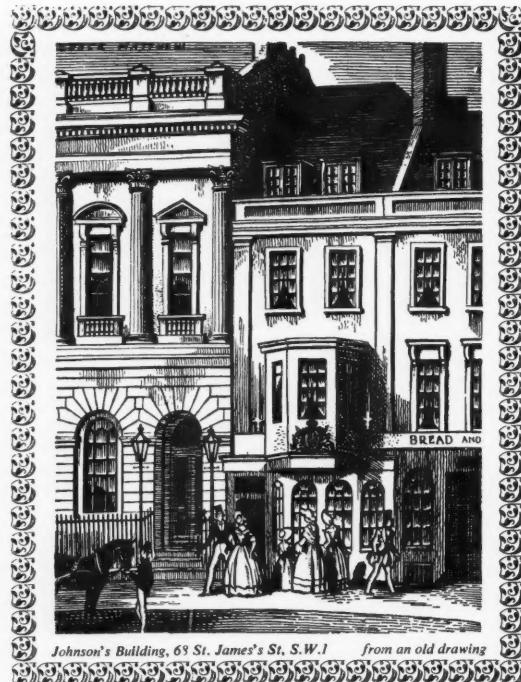
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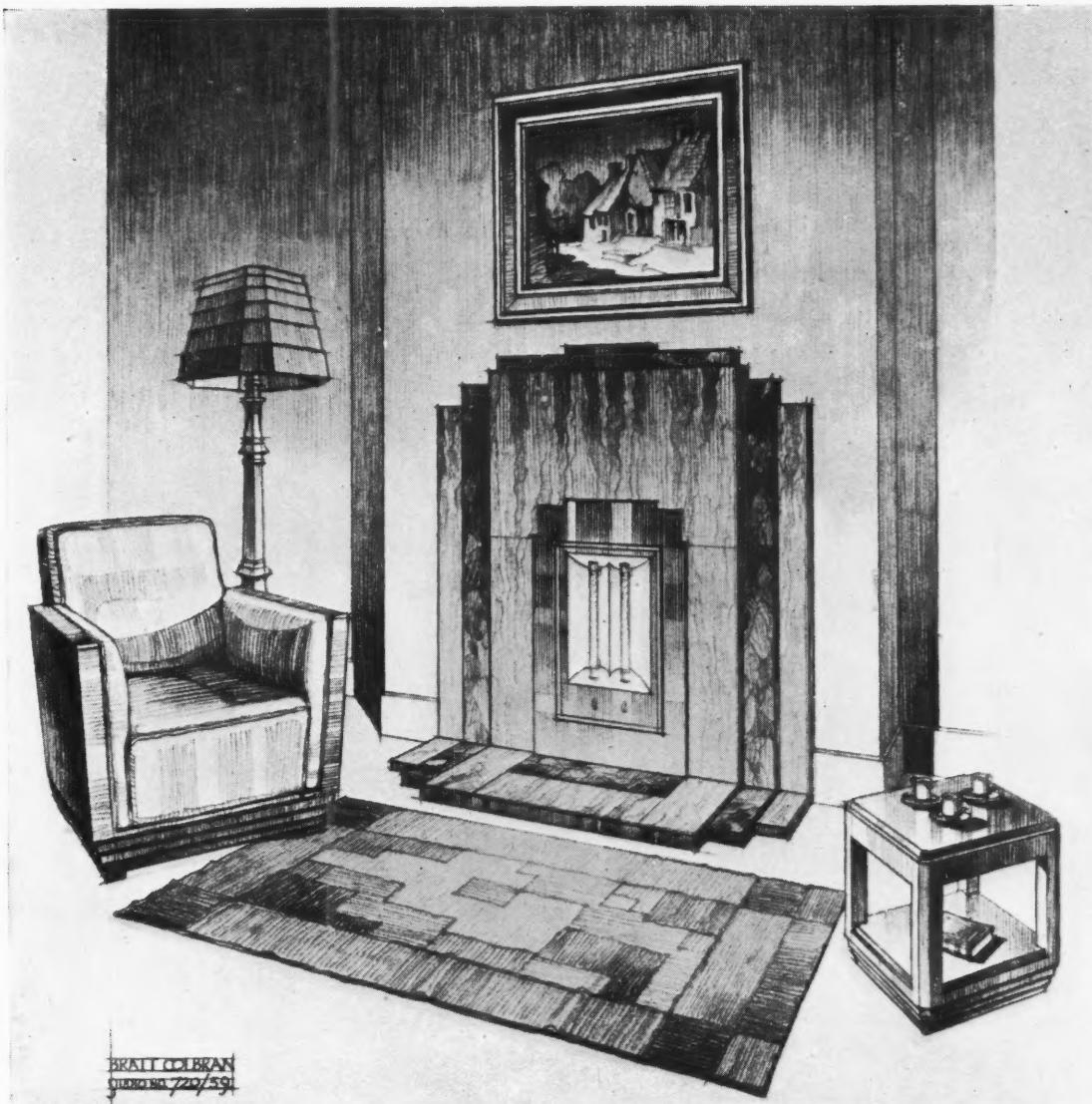
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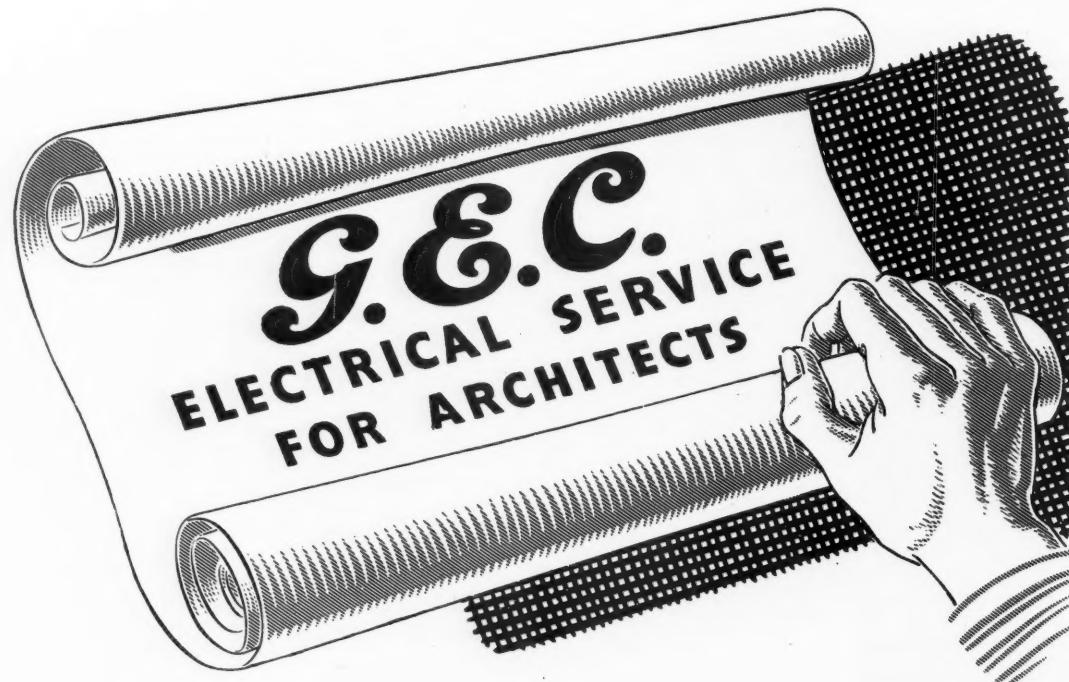
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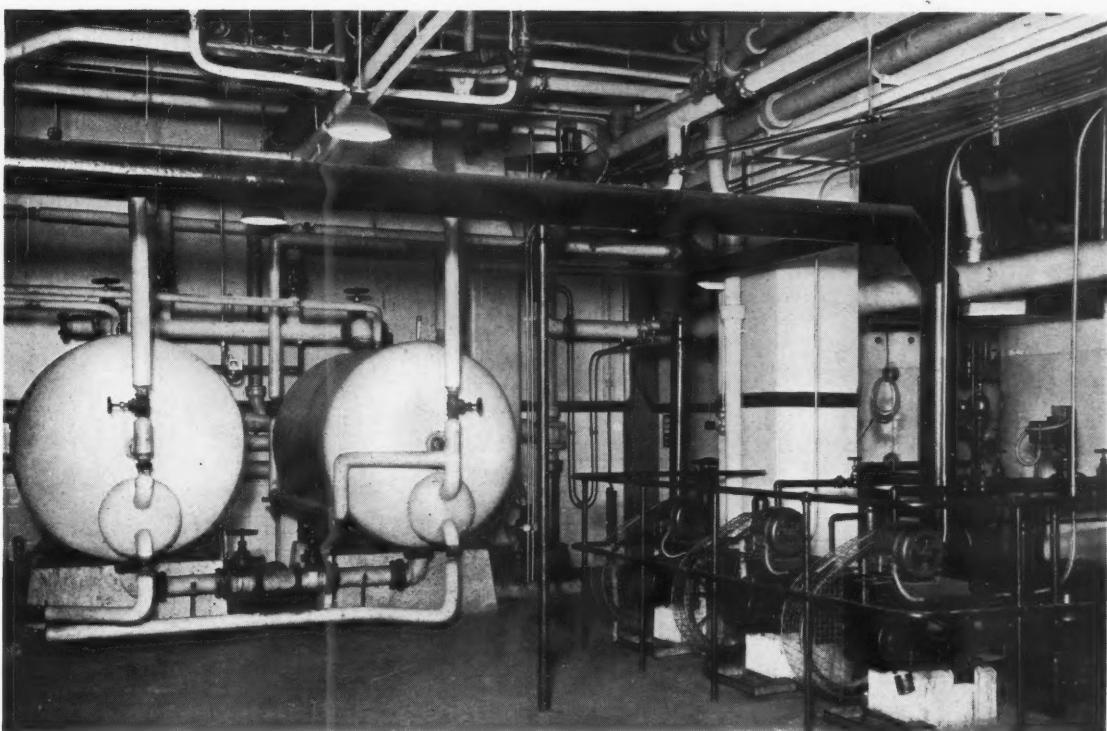
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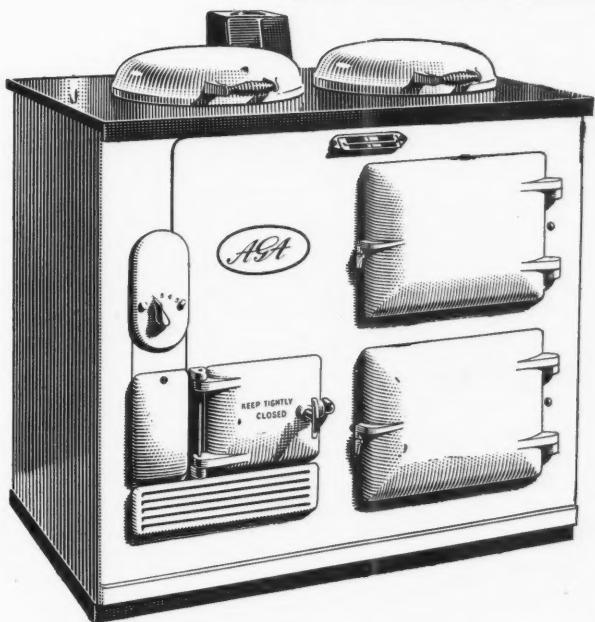
Aidas Electric Limited, Sadia Works, Rowdell Road, Northolt, Middlesex. 'Phone: WAXlow 1607

Scottish Agents: W. Brown & Co. (Engineers) Ltd., 89, Douglas Street, Glasgow, C.2.

## HEAT STORAGE COOKING

EXAMPLE

THE AGA COOKER

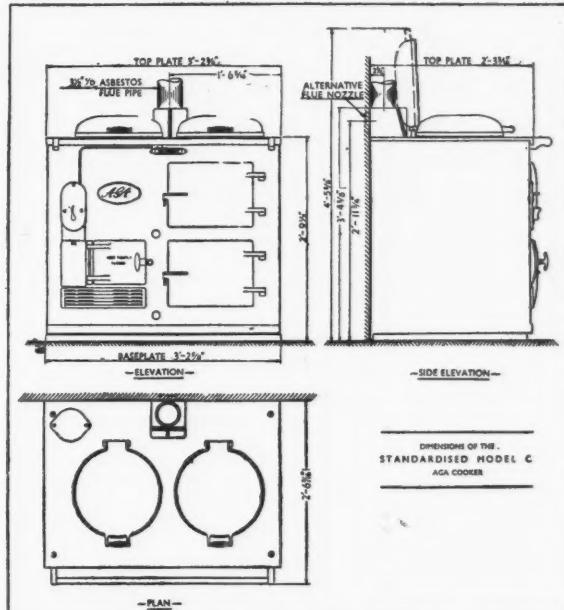


WEIGHT: Approximately 10½ cwt.

INSTALLATION: It fits right back against the wall: the flue pipe can be taken either straight up to the chimney or else a different flue chamber can be fitted and the stub taken to a built-in flue. It is recommended that the AGA Cooker should stand on a sheet of asbestos cement or asbestos millboard (in the case of a wooden floor): or it may be raised on a brick or cement dais flush with the front plate of the cooker. It is important that the hearth or base upon which the cooker stands should be perfectly level.

### SPECIFICATION FOR MODEL C:

The dimensions of this model are given in the drawings below, which show front and side elevations and plan. It is recommended for average conditions in a medium-sized house. It provides a fast boiling plate and a separate simmering plate, and two ovens, one for roasting and one for simmering and plate-warming. It is guaranteed not to consume more than an annual maximum of 2½ tons of fuel.



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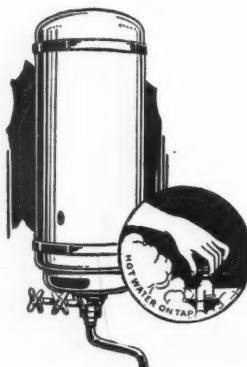


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from below and incidentally makes it easy to spot a dropped tool or a fallen screw.

★ Here is a suggested specification: (1) walls pearl-grey; (2) structural beams smoke-grey; (3) ceiling white; (4) dado and end walls dark chocolate; (5) floor pale burnt red concrete; (6) assembly line white; (7) doors and window frames black; (8) number-boards white on dark chocolate. A reproduction of the above illustration, with actual colour references, will gladly be supplied on request, price 1d. Further subjects will be published in due course. Please write to The Silicate Paint Co. (J. B. Orr and Co., Ltd.), Charlton, London, S.E.7.

**DURESCO**

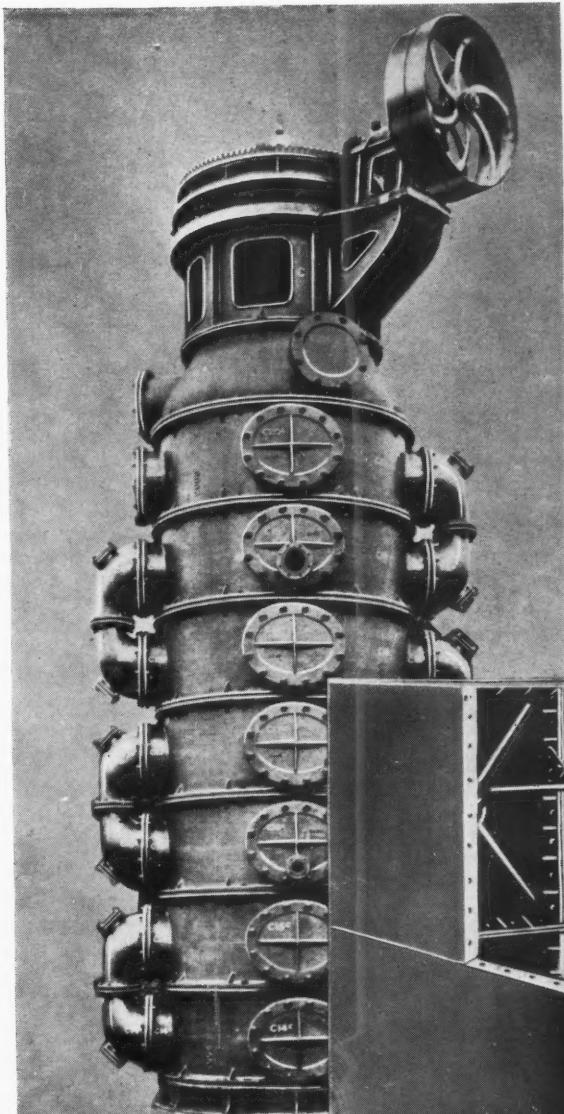
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There are three stages in the making of evaporated milk. Stage one is Strawberry (calved in February now giving three and-a-half gallons). Stage two is a six feet wide double coil of stainless steel tube. Stage three is the tin you buy over the counter.

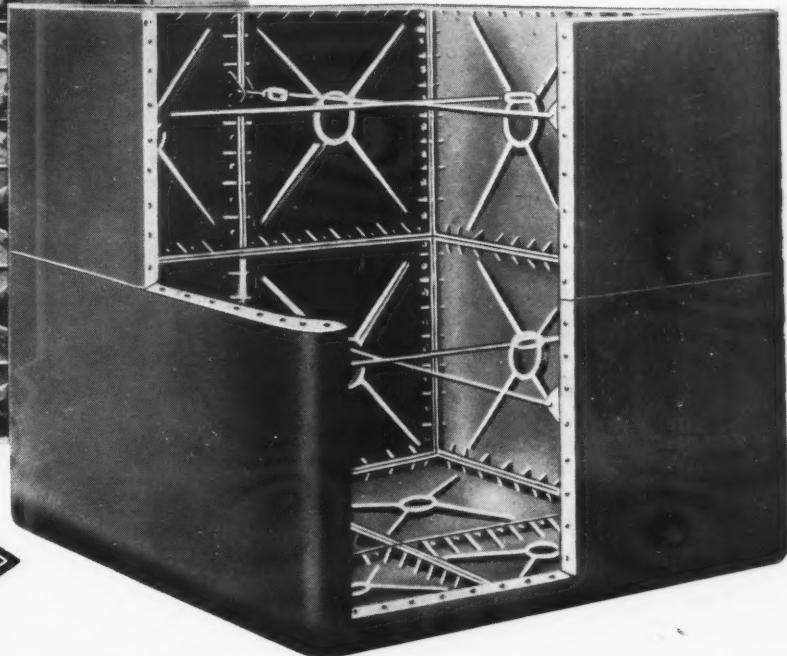
The Talbot-Stead Tube Company was responsible for charming the steel tubes into the intricate shape shown in stage two and it is not the first time that manufacturers have watched their difficulties evaporate through the channels of stainless steel tubes.

*An advertisement published by*  *Tube Investments Limited for*  
**TALBOT-STEAR TUBE COMPANY LTD**  
GREEN LANE · WALSALL



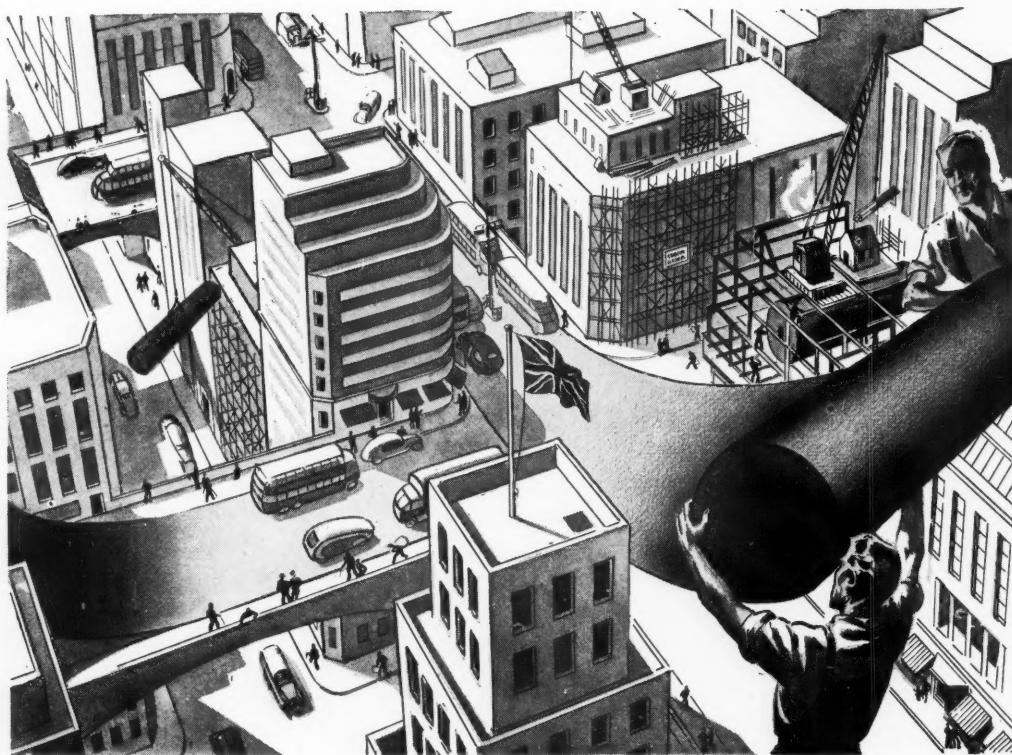
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*Larder space rendered unnecessary. Dry goods and non-perishable foodstuffs would be kept in kitchen cupboards.*

*Waist - high refrigerator door, allowing access to interior without stooping.*

*Height adaptable by varying position of supporting frames.*

*Refrigerator can be built into kitchen fittings with cupboard space above and below it.*

*Design provides for adequate ventilation of mechanism without the necessity for special air-bricks or ducting.*

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And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
— I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.” ROBERT FROST (U.S.A.)

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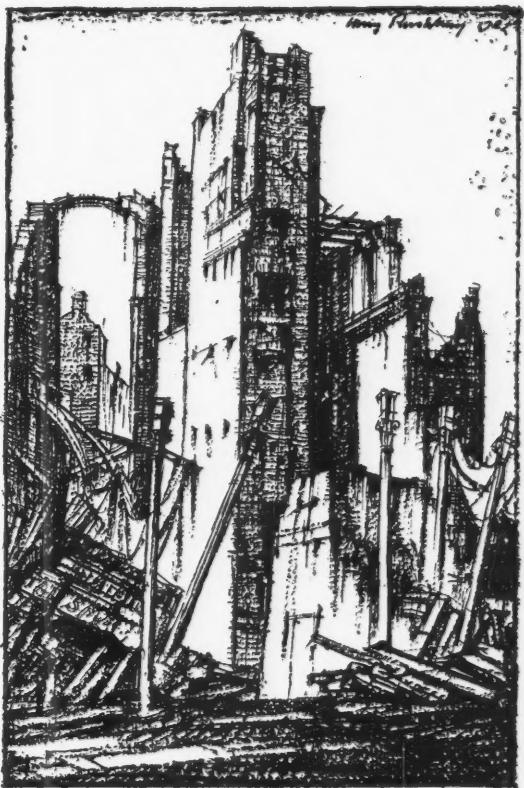


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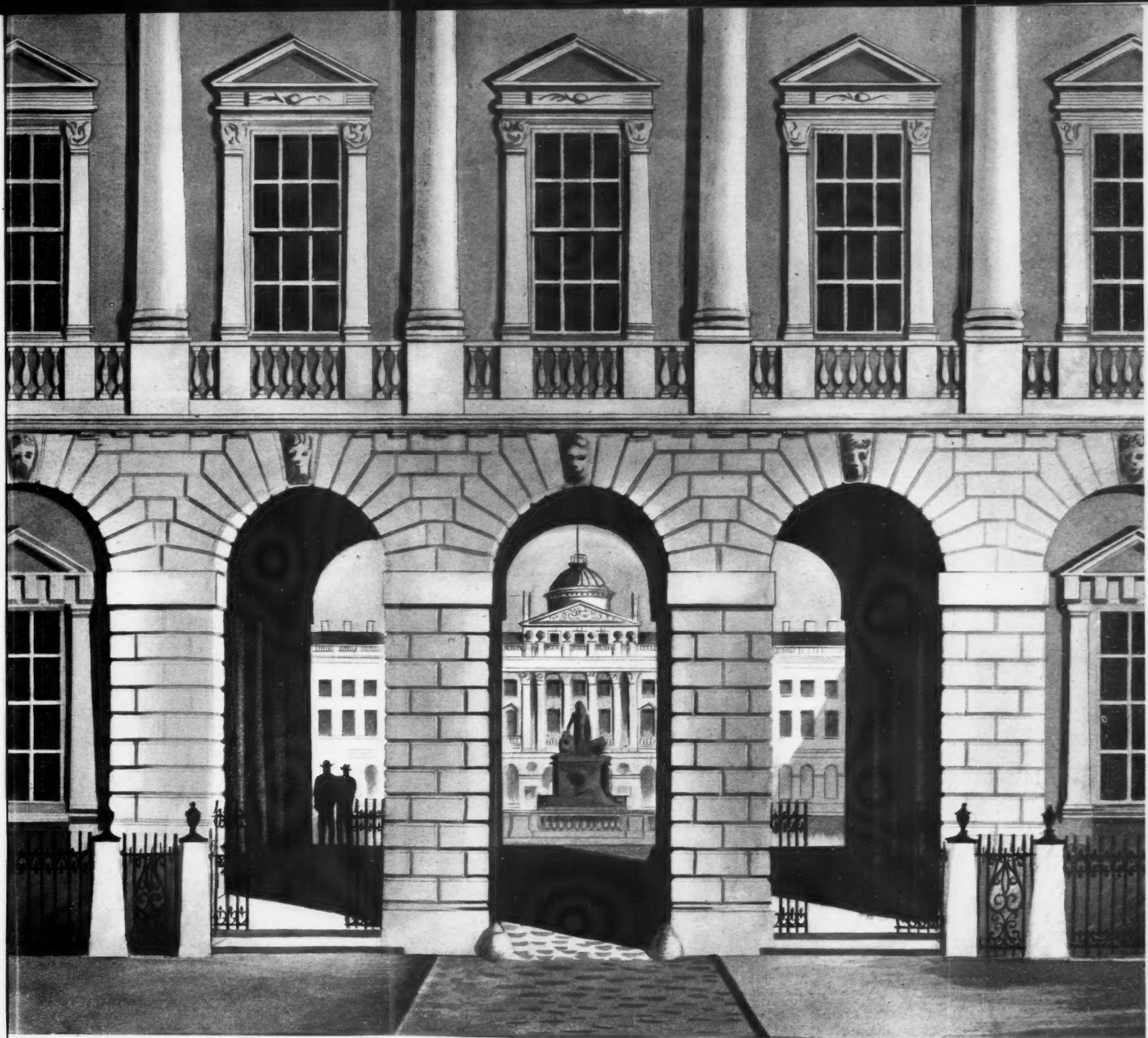
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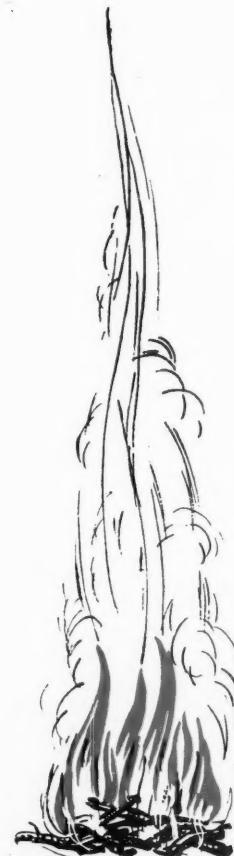
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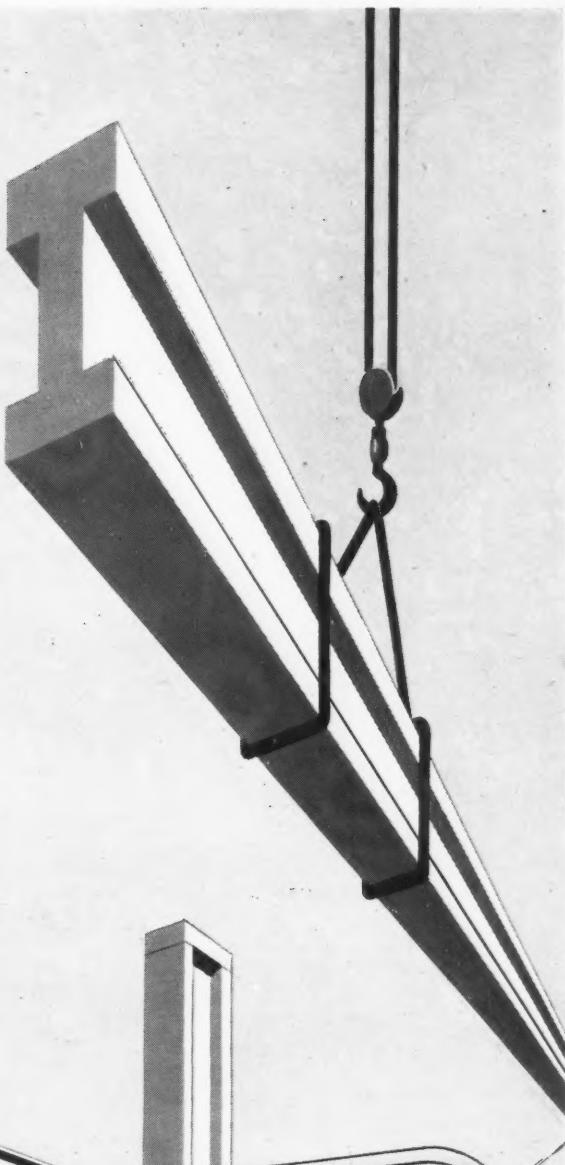
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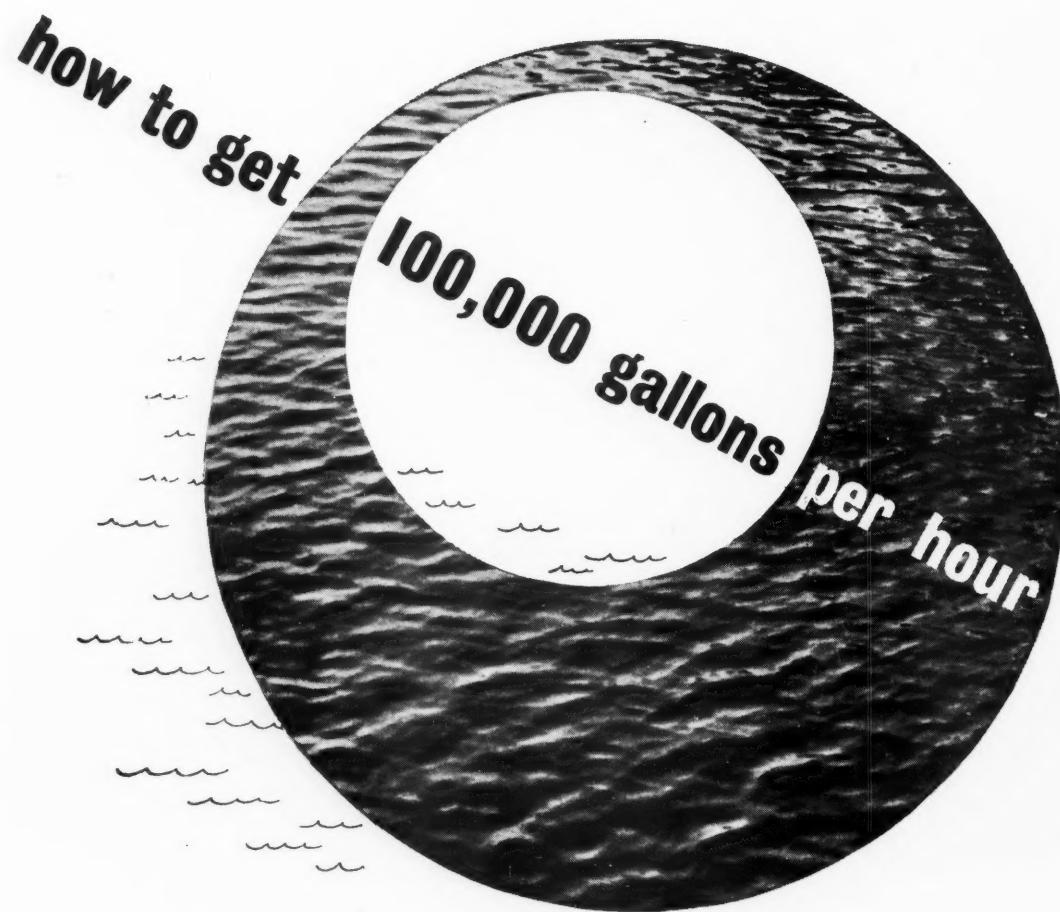
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## WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS OF SHOP DESIGN?

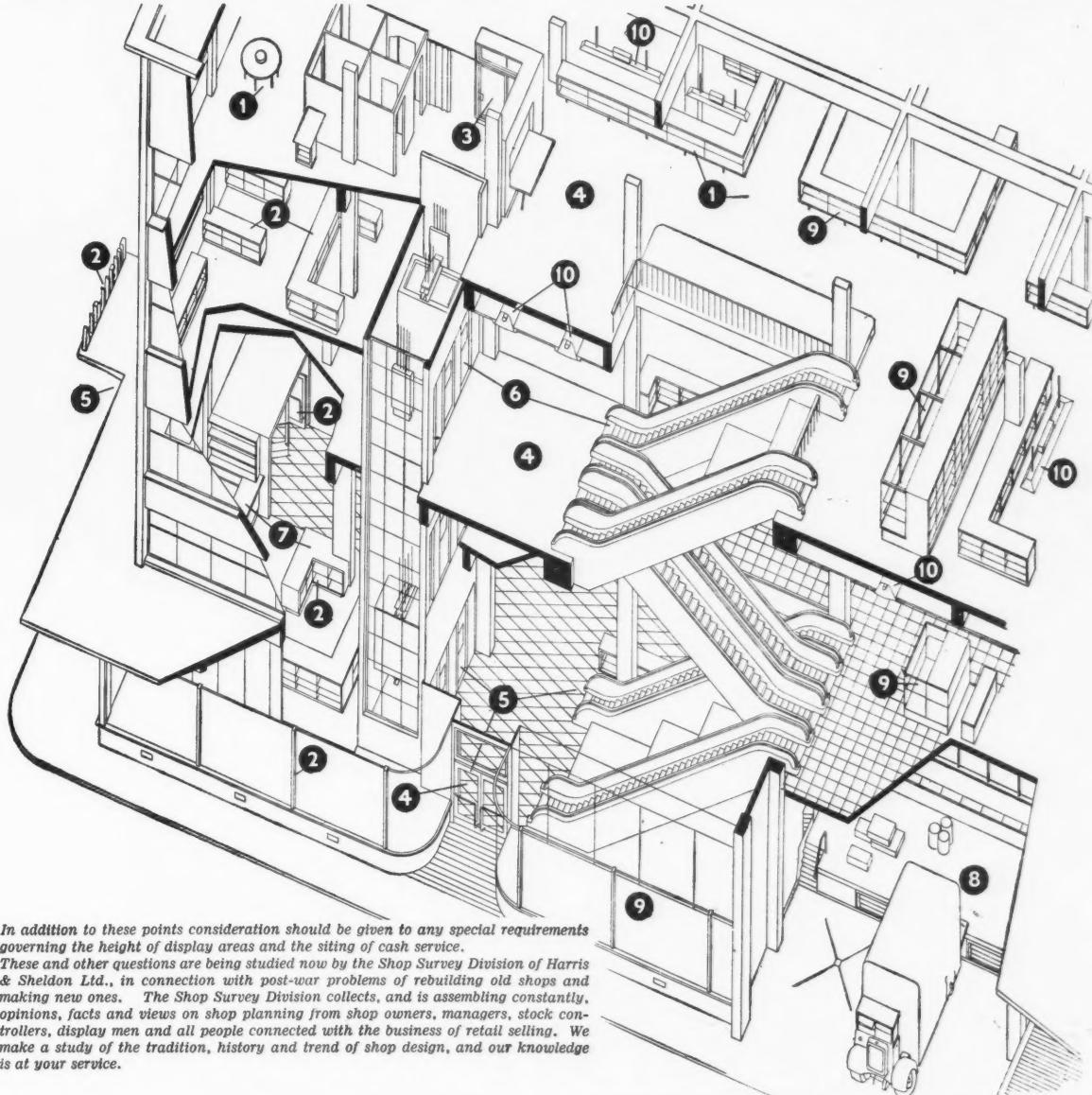
TAKE, FOR EXAMPLE, THE QUESTIONS THAT ARISE FROM INTERIOR LAYOUT:

1. What is the income of the majority of customers — i.e. should the plan of the shop be designed to give an impression of high class and exclusive trade or one of popular, mass appeal?
2. If a popular type of store, what materials best lend themselves to standardisation without losing eye appeal? i.e. for door surrounds, counter tops, display cases and lettering.
3. Is any degree of privacy essential

in any department? This can be formed by the use of storage and display cases and is usually best arranged on upper floors away from main circulation.

4. Is the volume of business spread evenly over the week, or are there special peak periods for which provision must be made in the form of wide circulation space and additional entrances and exits?
5. What is the most practical relationship between the entrance doors and the lifts and escalators? i.e. should customers be encouraged to pass through the store to reach lifts, etc.? How should emergency exits be arranged in relation to lifts, stairs, etc.?
6. Will lifts, escalators, or both carry the main traffic loads?
7. What are the most important departments for the particular store's business — how should space be allocated and divided? In this case space has been allowed close to entrance.

8. What arrangements are to be made for intake and storage of merchandise and for dispatch — use of side street or internal court within the shop — connection to basement by chutes and conveyors?
9. What size of display area is required? Is it to be continuous or broken up?
10. What methods of lighting? Use of fluorescent lighting. Use of recessed or sunk fittings.



In addition to these points consideration should be given to any special requirements governing the height of display areas and the siting of cash service. These and other questions are being studied now by the Shop Survey Division of Harris & Sheldon Ltd., in connection with post-war problems of rebuilding old shops and making new ones. The Shop Survey Division collects, and is assembling constantly, opinions, facts and views on shop planning from shop owners, managers, stock controllers, display men and all people connected with the business of retail selling. We make a study of the tradition, history and trend of shop design, and our knowledge is at your service.

PUBLISHED BY THE SHOP SURVEY DIVISION OF **HARRIS & SHELDON LIMITED**  
MAKERS OF SHOPS

Works & Head Office: Stafford Street, Birmingham, 4. Telephone: Central 7101. London Office: 27, Berkeley Square, W.1. Telephone: Mayfair 2017. Glasgow Office: 94, Miller Street. Manchester Office: Fernleaf Street, Moss Side. Loughborough Office: Woodgate.

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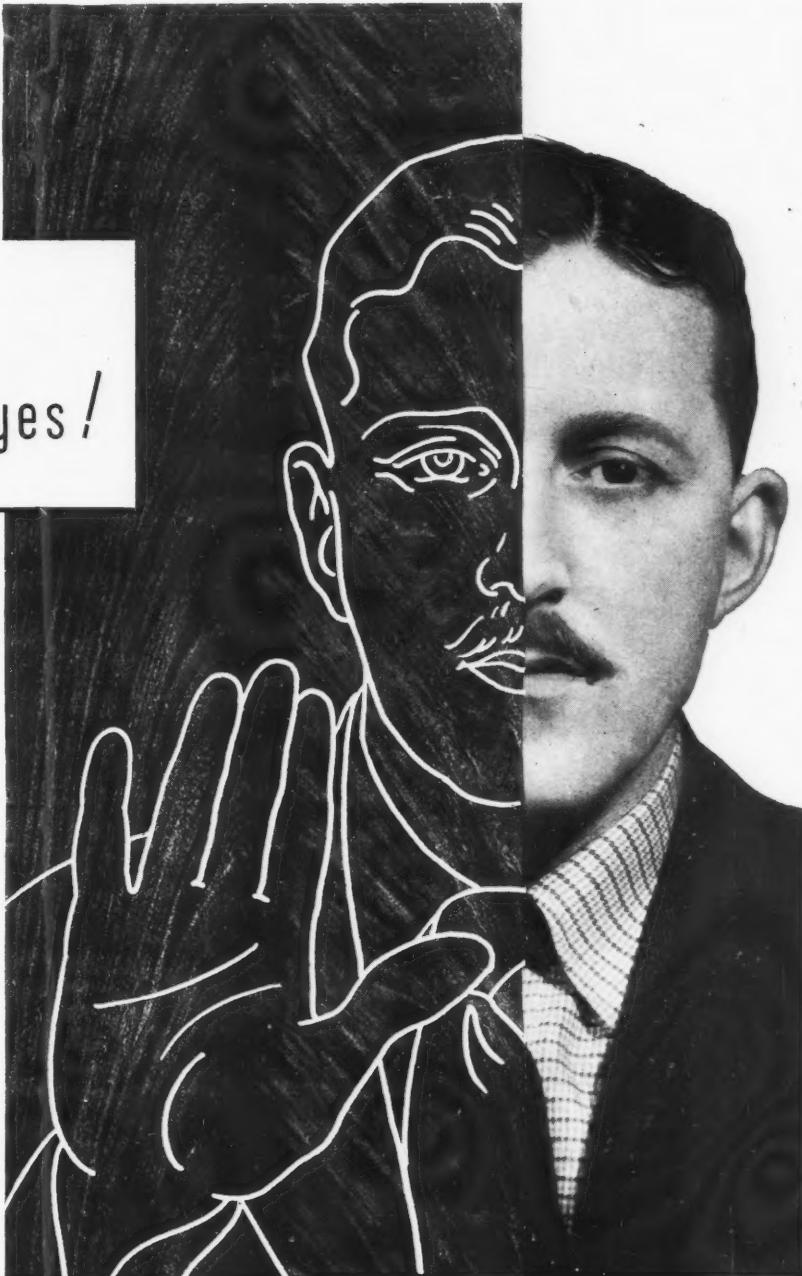
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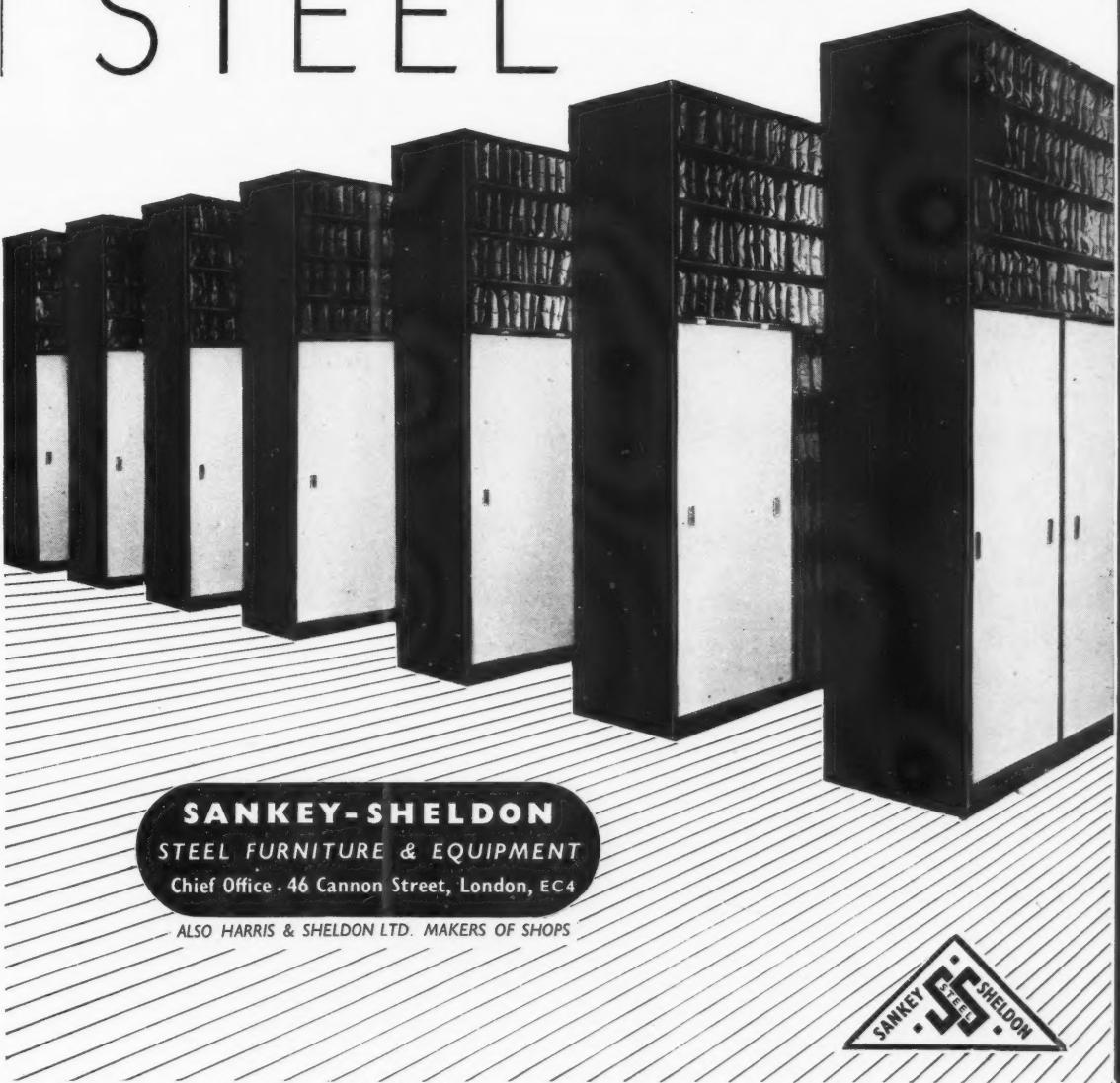
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(The numbers in brackets correspond to the key numbers in the drawing.)

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**Clerestory lighting (2)**: By means of a Rolled Glass with fine lines on one side, for example  $\frac{1}{4}$ " Rolled Glass. This will ensure directional diffusion of light.

**HALL** Windows and Observation Window in Staffroom (3) : Sheet Glass.

**KITCHEN** Walls (4) : "Vitrolite".

**Ventilation canopies (5)** : Georgian Wired Cast glass panels.

**Service hatch (6)** : Georgian Wired Cast sliding glass panels, or, if vision is desired, Polished Georgian Wired Glass.

**LARDER** Windows (7) : Anti-fly Glass.

**LAUNDRY ROOM** Walls (8) : "Vitrolite" provides a hygienic, non-absorbent surface.

**LAVATORIES** Walls (9) : Should be finished in some smooth, hard surface, upon which it is difficult to scribble: "Vitrolite."

**Windows (10)** : Pinhead Morocco or other formal patterned Cathedral, provide privacy with light diffusion.

**CLOAKROOMS** Walls (11) : The walls should be lined to a height of about 5 ft. with a hard, smooth surface which can be readily washed: "Vitrolite."

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(12) Wired Glass provides protection against weather, with safety.

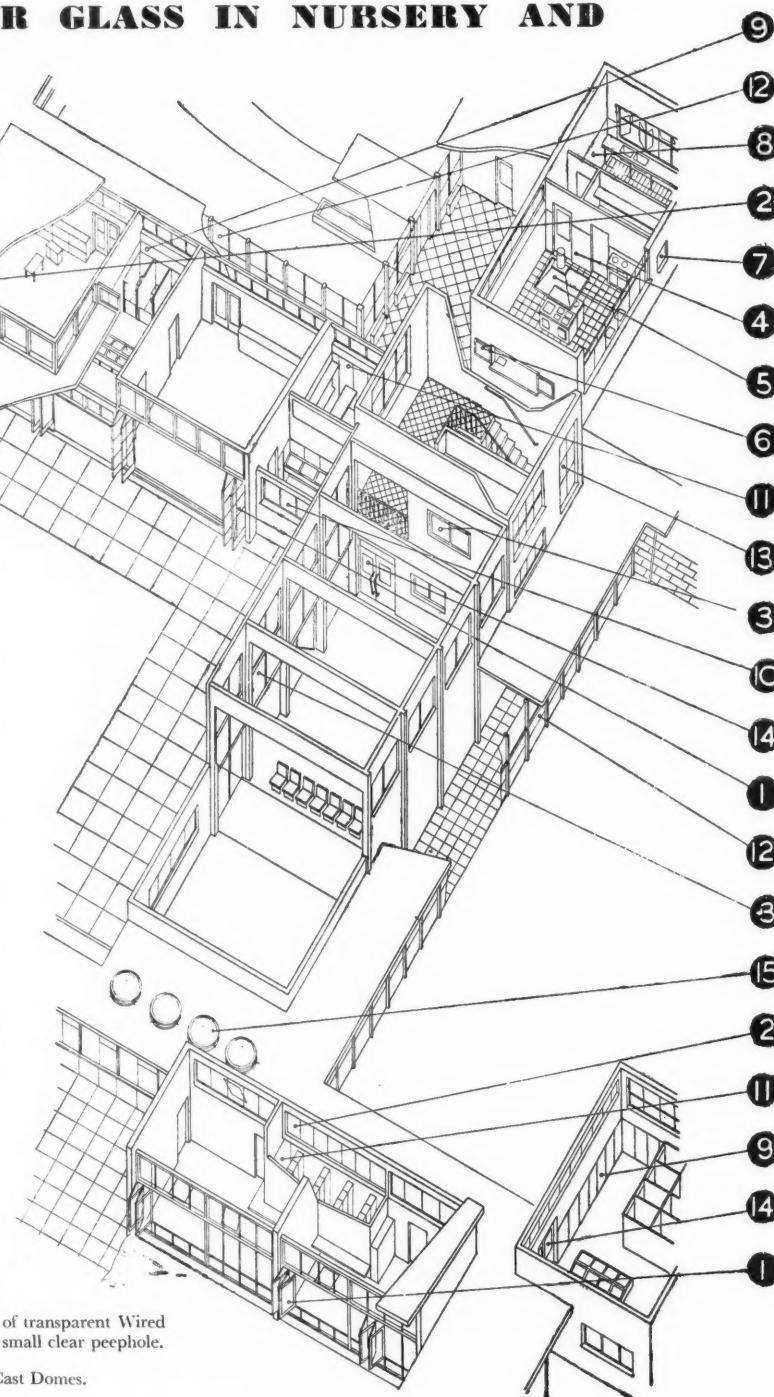
**STAIRCASE** (13) Wired Glass or Glass Bricks provide daylight with protection against spread of fire.

**DOORS** (14) : Wired Reinforced Glass panels will provide safeguard against damage caused by broken glass due to slamming, etc. They can be of transparent Wired Glass to provide vision, or of translucent glass with small clear peephole.

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*This is published by Pilkington Brothers Limited, of St. Helens, Lancashire, whose Technical Department is always available for consultation regarding the properties and uses of glass in architecture.*

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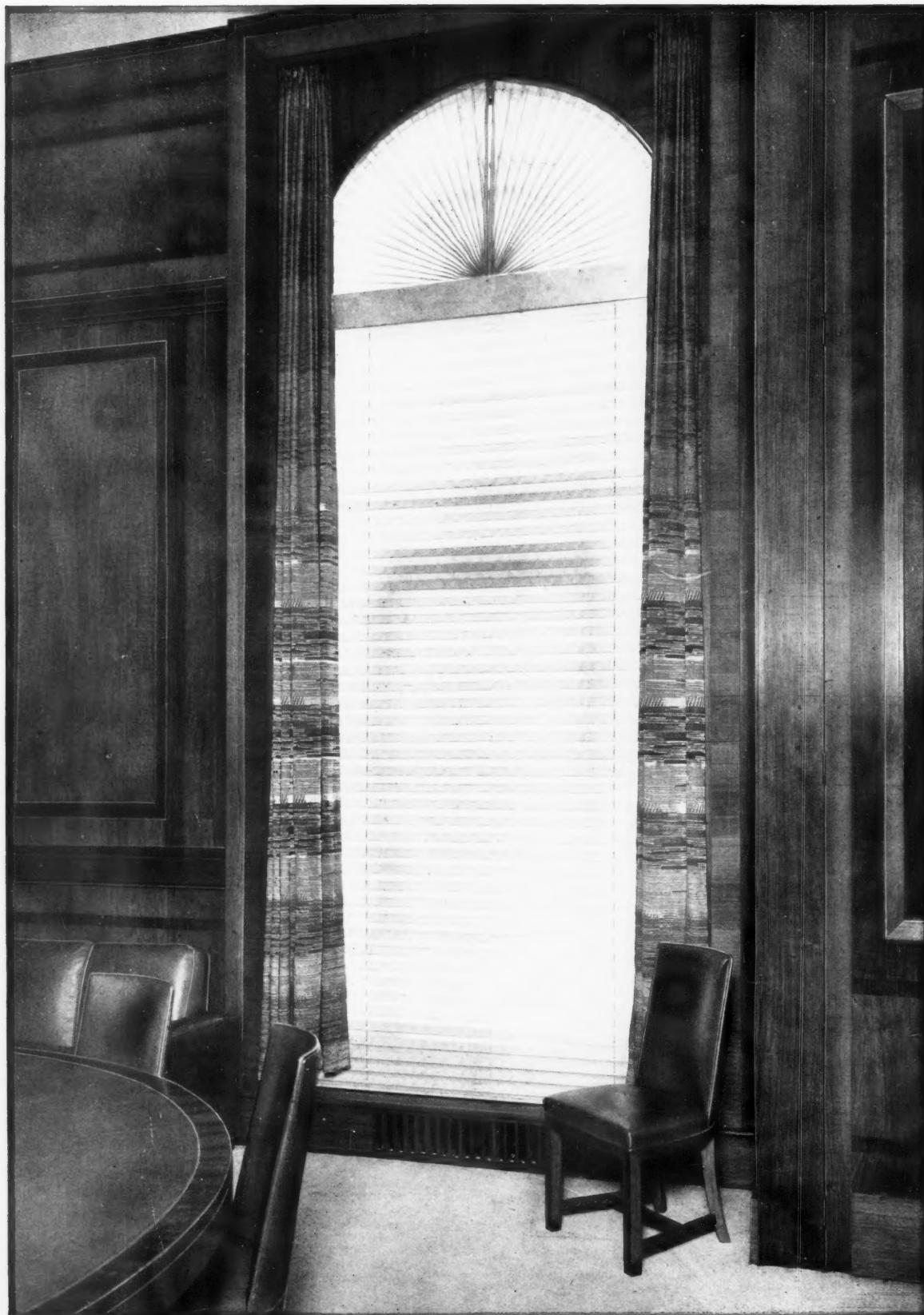
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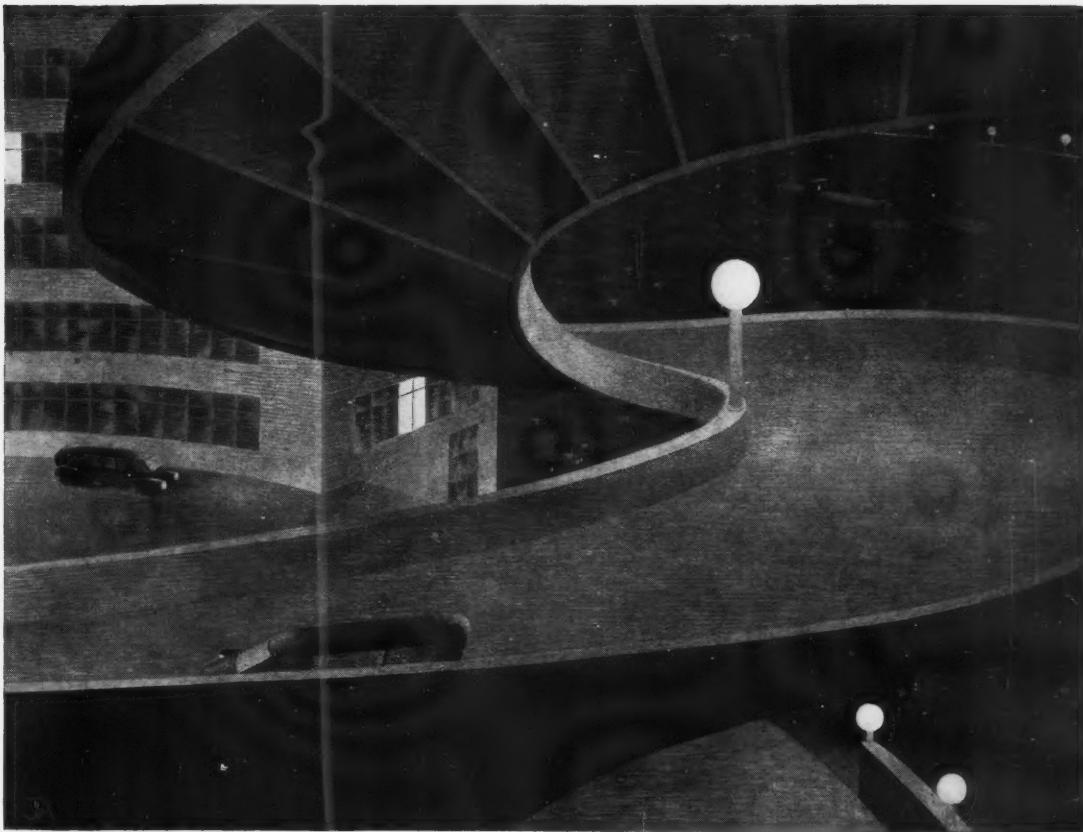
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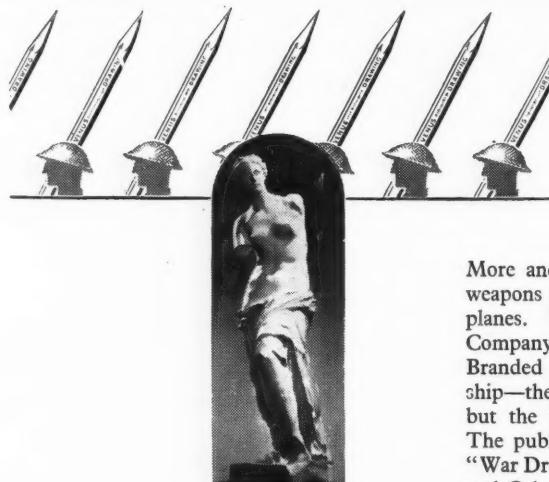
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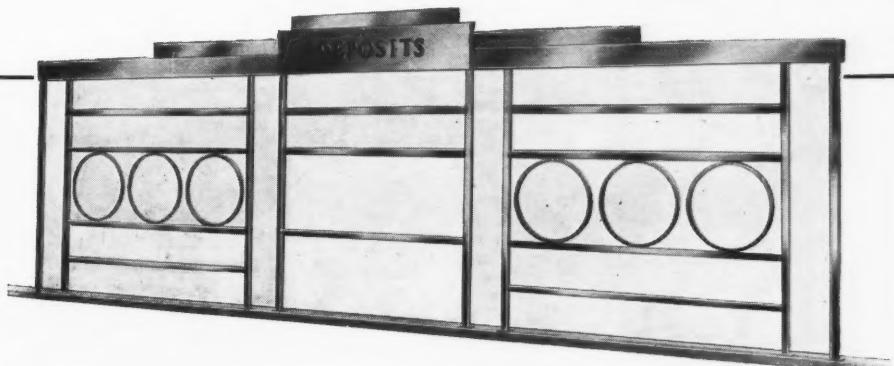


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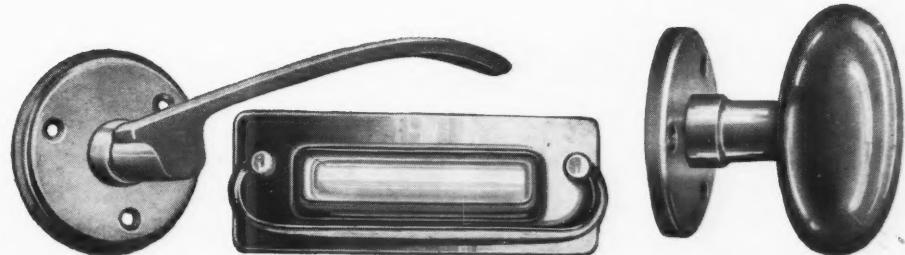
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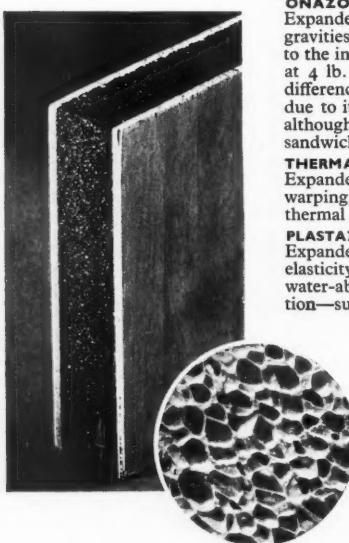
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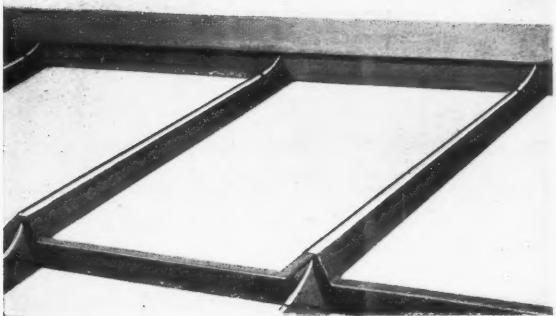


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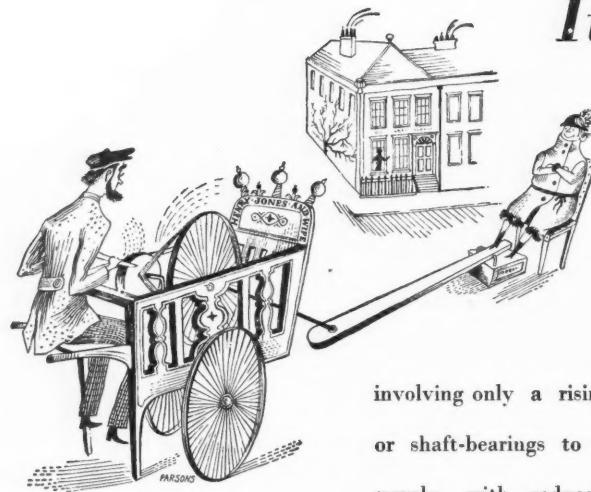
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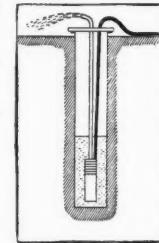
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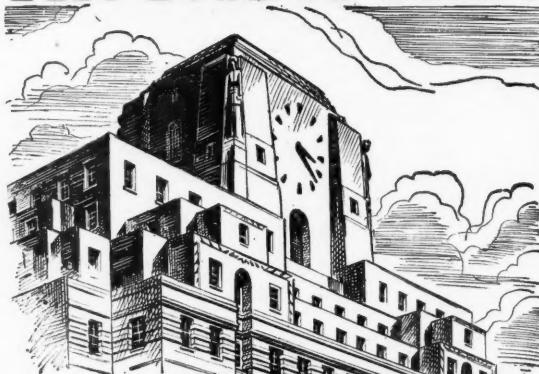
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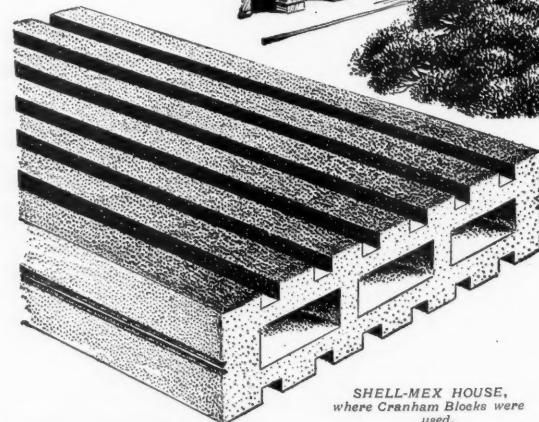
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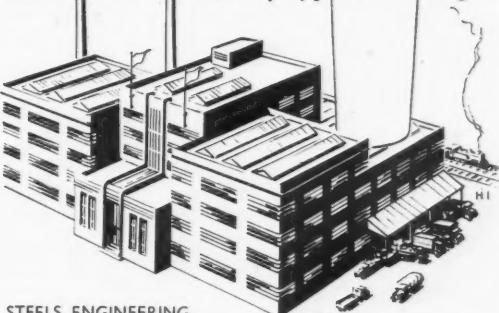
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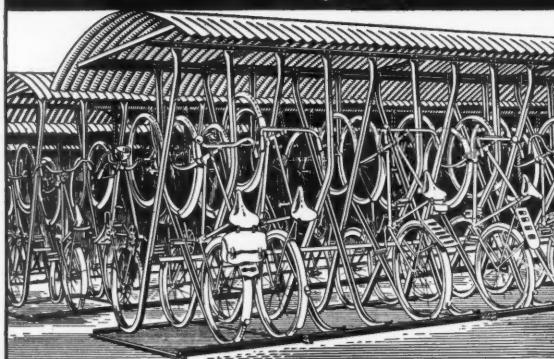
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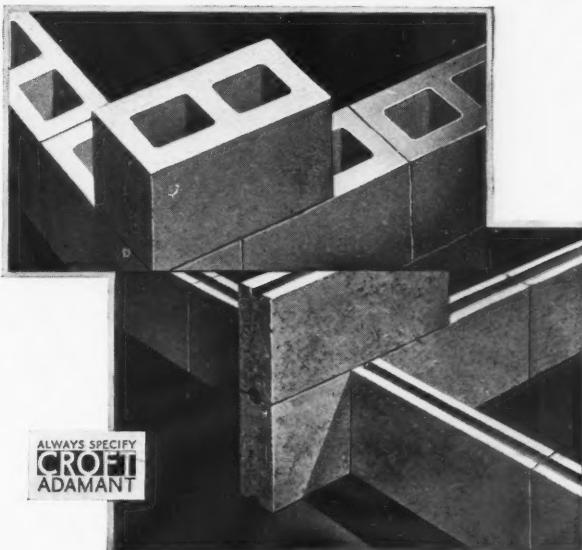
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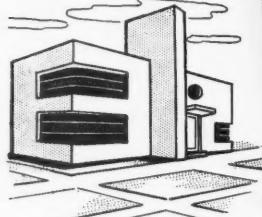
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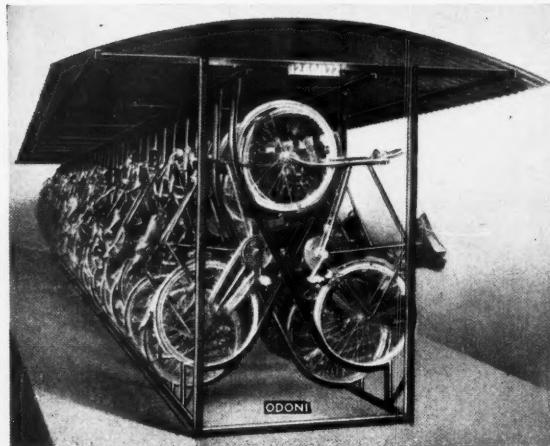
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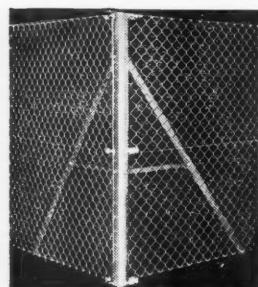
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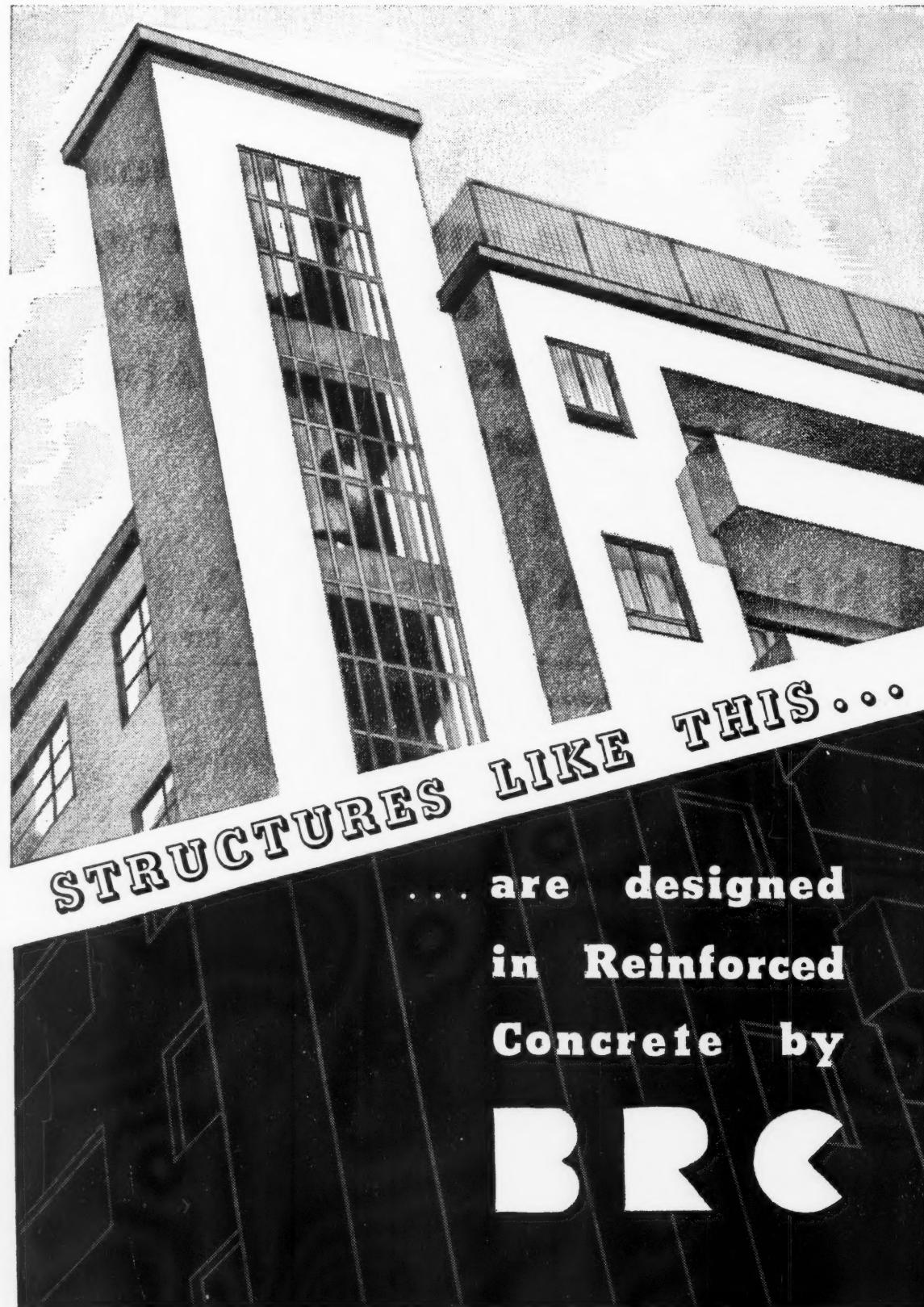
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